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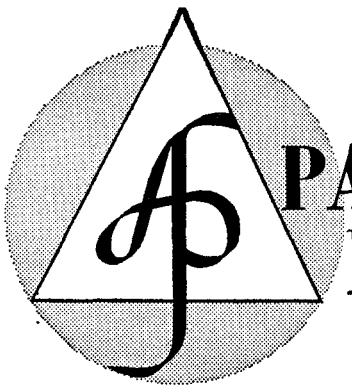

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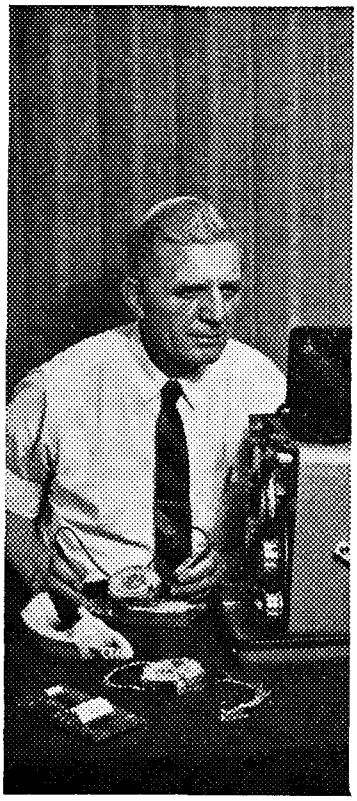

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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the scholar cornered

Eisenhower Over the Shoulder

The States have passed thru a
dam'd supercilious era
—Ezra Pound

"The Eisenhower years," William Shannon wrote, when the period had only a few weeks to run, "have been years of flabbiness and self-satisfaction and gross materialism. . . . [The] loudest sound in the land has been the oink-and-grunt of private hoggishness. . . . It has been the age of the slob." Yes, yes—and then again no. The country did put on a lot of weight that wasn't muscle. But as for "self-satisfaction," was there ever a reasonably stable society that wasn't more pleased with itself than it had a right to be? And isn't "materialism" always "gross"? Still, Shannon has hold of what I think I would call about a two-thirds truth. There is really no denying that the Fifties in the United States were years in which private hoggishness reached some spectacular heights. But "the age of the slob"—no, I don't think that will do.

There is much to be said about the Eisenhower years, a good deal in dispraise, quite a bit in praise, but one must begin, I think, by acknowledging that the period itself had a history, that it took some of its character from what had gone before, that there were important differences between the early period and the late period, and that in any case American life is never all of a piece. As one who in 1956 published a book called *The Eisenhower Years,* I am in a rather poor position to point out that historians and journalists who try to write history have a way of misleading themselves and their readers by associating epochs and pivotal events with the names of ruling or presiding figures. There is, to be sure, a sense in which an American President stamps his character on a period and a sense in which his countrymen tend to become like him. At the same time, there are powerful currents that are scarcely touched by him and, always, currents that run powerfully against him. I happen to believe that during the Eisenhower years—and in part because they *were* the Eisenhower years—many currents of great promise were running. We were a self-satisfied people, as Shannon said, yet we were terribly uneasy in our complacency and elected as Eisenhower's successor a man whose entire campaign was an assault on complacency. During the Eisenhower years, we developed—great numbers of us—an enormous dissatisfaction with our educational systems and with American intellectual life in general. Of course, it was largely the prodding of the Russians that did it. But that hardly seems to me to matter; we made, I think, some vigorous responses. It was during the Eisenhower years, too, that we became more alert than ever before to civil rights and civil liberties. It was in Eisenhower's day and Joe McCarthy's that the United States Supreme Court did more than in any preceding time to protect and secure the rights of minorities and of individuals.

And it has to be said, neither in praise nor in dispraise, that the election of Dwight Eisenhower in 1952 did not mark an abrupt transition from an elevated concern for the private interest to a base absorption with the private interest. Eisenhower's predecessor was, on balance, a good and gallant President, but not everything about his Administration, or about American life in

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his time, was admirable. The oink-and-grunt of private hoggishness was more than audible in the Truman years; indeed, as the end drew near, it was almost deafening. There was corruption in half a dozen government agencies, and some of it was laid at the door of persons very close to the President. Much of the corruption was picayune; there was little grandeur in the larcenies. Still, hoggishness in the middle-income brackets is not much lovelier than hoggishness among the very rich. In his last year in office Truman sought to tidy things up by investigation and reorganization, but his efforts were frustrated by his subordinates, particularly in the Department of Justice where things were in the sorriest mess, and nothing of moment was done.

Corruption played a part in the retirement of the Democrats in 1952. So did the Korean war, which was as unpopular as it was just. So did Senator McCarthy's blather about Communists in the State Department, which was as popular as it was unjust. The fact is that the American people in 1952 were a confused, bitter, divided lot. We were prosperous but far from content in our prosperity. We were performing large and necessary services to freedom but not fully persuaded of the need for what we were being called upon to do, and although we had put isolationism behind us, as a simply impossible way of looking at the world, we nevertheless resented a world that asked so much of us. In the preceding decade we had fought and won two overseas wars that not too many of us, at the outset, had acknowledged to be our proper concern. We had been led by Franklin Roosevelt to believe that our sacrifices (small alongside those of our major allies, but less clearly related in the minds of citizens to national security) would rid the world of its principal troublemakers. No sooner had those troublemakers—the German and Japanese militarists and the political structures that supported them—been destroyed than we were asked to arm against a new global menace, said to be even worse than the enemies so recently vanquished. In Korea we were asked to fight a particularly nasty kind of war and were told that it would be in very bad taste to seek victory of the traditional sort; having only a few years earlier absorbed the doctrine of "total war" and "unconditional surrender," we were called upon to make a quick shift to limited war and highly conditional victory.

The disagreeable turn that events had taken in the early Fifties invited demagogic explanation. And a really first-rate demagogue arose to explain them with that most effective of devices for interpreting history to the masses—the conspiracy theory. McCarthy said that things were as they were because the governors had encouraged betrayal. There was a time, in late 1953 and early 1954, when, according to the polls, half the people thought he was performing a useful service.

It seems to me now that Eisenhower's election in 1952 was a good thing for the country and that the first four Eisenhower years are not to be regretted. It was a time in which a new consensus was reached and a time in which tensions were considerably eased. It would have been agreeable, no doubt, to have had a more imaginative and more eloquent President—a Willkie, a Republican Adlai Stevenson, a Charles Evans Hughes. But the Republicans are our only alternative to the Democrats, and in 1952 *their* only alternative to Eisenhower was Robert A. Taft, an honorable and intelligent man but hardly a reducer of tensions. As Walter Lippmann once pointed out, it *had* to be Eisenhower in 1952 in the same sense that it *had* to be George Washington in 1789. In his first term, he did many of the things that needed doing and that could not have been done by a Democratic administration.

He had, for one thing, to end the Korean war. By 1953, when he took office, the time had come to liquidate this enterprise. By their intervention in Korea in 1950, the United States and the United Nations had made the point that they would not flinch from resisting direct aggression by international communism and that they could find the resources for resistance. This was a great turning point in the cold war; the Communist bloc recognized it, and there were no more Koreas, and "containment"

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remained a feasible American policy. But by the time of Eisenhower's election, when the North Koreans and the Chinese Communists were being effectively contained north of the thirty-eighth parallel, further bloodshed was insupportable. The Truman Administration had entered into negotiations with the Communists and had reached the point where the basic terms of the settlement were clear. But the Truman Administration, intent on giving its domestic critics no grounds for charging it with appeasement, could not possibly have concluded the negotiations. Nor could a Stevenson administration. McCarthy and his animals would have set upon it and quite possibly have destroyed it as the effective agency of American power. There were times, indeed, when it looked as if the Republicans in Congress, ably led by Senator Knowland of California, would not let the Republican Administration negotiate a settlement. The President had to use all the prestige he had, and he did just that.

Eisenhower threw only a small amount of his prestige into the destruction of McCarthy, and for this he was constantly being faulted, as doubtless he deserved to be. It is very easy for anyone to say that McCarthy should have been stopped far sooner than he was. In my judgment, those who think this might have been done at little cost by the use of Presidential powers greatly underrate McCarthy's talents and the force of those currents of opinion he exploited. What seems to me remarkable is that by late 1954, less than two years after Eisenhower took office, McCarthy was done for. Eisenhower's contribution may have been slight. McCarthy did a great deal to destroy himself. But it seems to me doubtful in the extreme that the desirable end would have been reached in 1954 if the Democrats had been enjoying their sixth consecutive term in office and if the casualty lists from Korea had still been appearing every day in the papers. McCarthy had to be destroyed by his own party, and his own party out of power would not have attempted to destroy him—first, because it would have wished to use him; second, because he would not have been compelled to turn against it.

There is more to be said for the first four Eisenhower years. As James Reston once said, the President brought to NATO a valuable new member—the Republican Party. For all their rhetoric about Quemoy and Matsu and Formosa and Chiang Kai-shek, he and Secretary Dulles fashioned a China policy that probably saved us from some bloody and pointless engagements in the Far East. In foreign affairs, I can see little to regret in the Eisenhower Administration's stewardship during its first term.

It has never been easy for an American President to work his way out of the White House in four years. Bad luck and weak management must be combined, as they were in Herbert Hoover's day, to persuade the voters to deny a President a second term. The voters who put Eisenhower in office in 1952 made almost certain his re-election in 1956, and one can hardly say that they did the wise thing the first time and served themselves badly the second time. Nevertheless, the second four years go a long way toward justifying William Shannon's harsh impeachments. If there is anything much to be said for them, it has escaped my notice and understanding. By 1956, the tasks that had seemed to call for the bland Eisenhower treatment had all received it, and the rest, in Washington anyway, was drift and near-slumber. The cold war had taken on many new aspects. It had become in part a technological struggle, the kind that Americans should have relished more than any other, and Washington's response was feeble and grudging. The President, who by then had no political future to worry about, had a magnificent opportunity to take the Negro American's part in the struggle for elementary decency; he refused even to say with any vigor that he himself favored the one ideal that, historically, has been associated with this Republic as with no other. He increasingly surrounded himself with mediocrities and increasingly proclaimed as his own highest ideal the simple-minded, indeed semiliterate political economy of George Humphrey. Although he had never in his life been known as a military thinker, as distinct from a military executive, he

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became more and more impatient of criticism and more and more confident of his unique qualifications for deciding what we needed and what we did not need for the defense of the national interest in the mid-twentieth century.

It can be argued that he was an older soldier by several years, that he had done his work, that he had lost the men who had been closest to him in the first term, that he should not be made responsible for everything in a time that seemed somehow destined to be squalid. On the whole, this is so. He had the same faults and virtues after 1956 that he had had before—only the faults seemed to count for more, the virtues for less. He had always been a rather irritable Dr. Pangloss, but a time came when the irritability seemed merely self-indulgent. The last half of the Fifties was not made for a President who was unhurried and untroubled, disapproving only of the disapprovers. In a way, the tragedy, if that is not too large a word for it, of that period was that we did not have a President who wanted to keep abreast of the more salutary developments within American society—the intellectual ferment, the technological ferment, the struggles for equality. His growing cantankerousness and stubbornness were responses to the demands that he be more troubled, more in a hurry, more alive.

Many of the things that make us think of it as a squalid period cannot be laid at his door. He bears some responsibility for Sherman Adams and Dixon-Yates, but little for Jimmy Hoffa or Orval Faubus. The loudest of the oink-and-grunt set—the newly rich of Texas and the Southwest—were protected by Lyndon Johnson, Sam Rayburn and Robert S. Kerr. The tide of superciliousness had begun to run before Eisenhower and is running pretty strong today. (The only youth movements that attracted much attention—the conservatives who flocked to William F. Buckley, Jr.'s banner and the beatniks—were alike in their superciliousness and in their flagrant selfishness.) But it would have helped greatly, it would have gone a long way toward redeeming the bad time, if the President of the United States had had some convictions of his own and had said what they were.

RICHARD H. ROVERE

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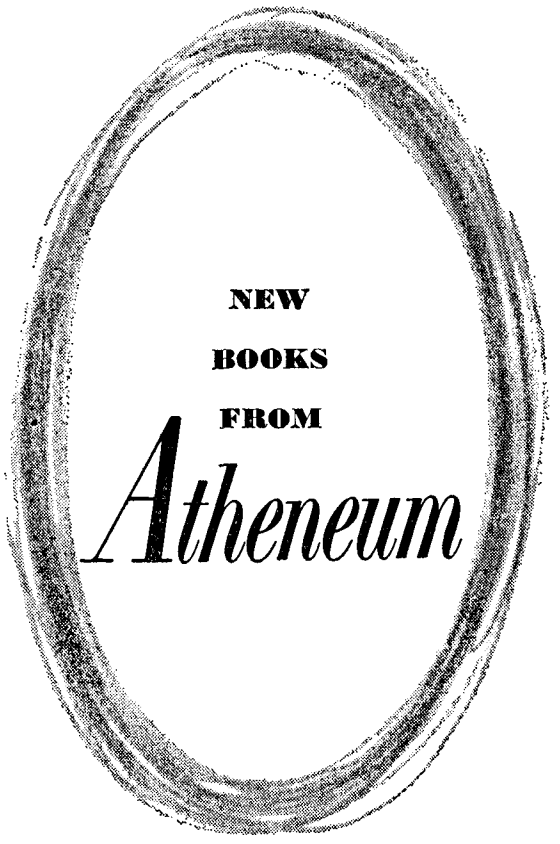

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In Favor of Capital Punishment

JACQUES BARZUN

A PASSING REMARK OF MINE in the *Mid-Century* magazine has brought me a number of letters and a sheaf of pamphlets against capital punishment. The letters, sad and reproachful, offer me the choice of pleading ignorance or being proved insensitive. I am asked whether I know that there exists a worldwide movement for the abolition of capital punishment which has everywhere enlisted able men of every profession, including the law. I am told that the death penalty is not only inhuman but also unscientific, for rapists and murderers are really sick people who should be cured, not killed. I am invited to use my imagination and acknowledge the unbearable horror of every form of execution.

I am indeed aware that the movement for abolition is widespread and articulate, especially in England. It is headed there by my old friend and publisher, Mr. Victor Gollancz, and it numbers such well-known writers as Arthur Koestler, C. H. Rolph, James Avery Joyce and Sir John Barry. Abroad as at home the profession of psychiatry tends to support the cure principle, and many liberal newspapers, such as the *Observer*, are committed to abolition. In the United States there are at least twenty-five state leagues working to the same end, plus a national league and several church councils, notably the Quaker and the Episcopal.

The assemblage of so much talent and enlightened goodwill behind a single proposal must give pause to anyone who supports the other side, and in the attempt to make clear my views, which are now close to unpopular, I start out by granting that my conclusion is arguable; that is, I am still open to conviction, *provided* some fallacies and frivolities in the abolitionist argument are first disposed of and the difficulties not ignored but overcome. I should

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be glad to see this happen, not only because there is pleasure in the spectacle of an airtight case, but also because I am not more sanguinary than my neighbor and I should welcome the discovery of safeguards—for society *and* the criminal—other than killing. But I say it again, these safeguards must really meet, not evade or postpone, the difficulties I am about to describe. Let me add before I begin that I shall probably not answer any more letters on this arousing subject. If this printed exposition does not do justice to my cause, it is not likely that I can do better in the hurry of private correspondence.

I readily concede at the outset that present ways of dealing out capital punishment are as revolting as Mr. Koestler says in his harrowing volume, *Hanged by the Neck*. Like many of our prisons, our modes of execution should change. But this objection to barbarity does not mean that capital punishment—or rather, judicial homicide—should not go on. The illicit jump we find here, on the threshold of the inquiry, is characteristic of the abolitionist and must be disallowed at every point. Let us bear in mind the possibility of devising a painless, sudden and dignified death, and see whether its administration is justifiable.

The four main arguments advanced against the death penalty are: *1*. punishment for crime is a primitive idea rooted in revenge; *2*. capital punishment does not deter; *3*. judicial error being possible, taking life is an appalling risk; *4*. a civilized state, to deserve its name, must uphold, not violate, the sanctity of human life.

I entirely agree with the first pair of propositions, which is why, a moment ago, I replaced the term capital punishment with "judicial homicide." The uncontrollable brute whom I want put out of the way is not to be punished for his misdeeds, nor used as an example or a warning; he is to be killed for the protection of others, like the wolf that escaped not long ago in a Connecticut suburb. No anger, vindictiveness or moral conceit need preside over the removal of such dangers. But a man's inability to control his violent impulses or to imagine the fatal consequences of his acts should be a presumptive reason for his elimination from society. This generality covers drunken driving and teen-age racing on public highways, as well as incurable obsessive violence; it might

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be extended (as I shall suggest later) to other acts that destroy, precisely, the moral basis of civilization.

But why kill? I am ready to believe the statistics tending to show that the prospect of his own death does not stop the murderer. For one thing he is often a blind egotist, who cannot conceive the possibility of his own death. For another, detection would have to be infallible to deter the more imaginative who, although afraid, think they can escape discovery. Lastly, as Shaw long ago pointed out, hanging the wrong man will deter as effectively as hanging the right one. So, once again, why kill? If I agree that moral progress means an increasing respect for human life, how can I oppose abolition?

I do so because on this subject of human life, which is to me the heart of the controversy, I find the abolitionist inconsistent, narrow or blind. The propaganda for abolition speaks in hushed tones of the sanctity of human life, as if the mere statement of it as an absolute should silence all opponents who have any moral sense. But most of the abolitionists belong to nations that spend half their annual income on weapons of war and that honor research to perfect means of killing. These good people vote without a qualm for the political parties that quite sensibly arm their country to the teeth. The West today does not seem to be the time or place to invoke the absolute sanctity of human life. As for the clergymen in the movement, we may be sure from the experience of two previous world wars that they will bless our arms and pray for victory when called upon, the sixth commandment notwithstanding.

"Oh, but we mean the sanctity of life *within* the nation!" Very well: is the movement then campaigning also against the principle of self-defense? Absolute sanctity means letting the cutthroat have his sweet will of you, even if you have a poker handy to bash him with, for you might kill. And again, do we hear any protest against the police firing at criminals on the street—mere bank robbers usually—and doing this, often enough, with an excited marksmanship that misses the artist and hits the bystander? The absolute sanctity of human life is, for the abolitionist, a slogan rather than a considered proposition.

Yet it deserves examination, for upon our acceptance or re-

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jection of it depend such other highly civilized possibilities as euthanasia and seemly suicide. The inquiring mind also wants to know, why the sanctity of *human* life alone? My tastes do not run to household pets, but I find something less than admirable in the uses to which we put animals—in zoos, laboratories and space machines—without the excuse of the ancient law, "Eat or be eaten."

It should moreover be borne in mind that this argument about sanctity applies—or would apply—to about ten persons a year in Great Britain and to between fifty and seventy-five in the United States. These are the average numbers of those executed in recent years. The count by itself should not, of course, affect our judgment of the principle: one life spared or forfeited is as important, morally, as a hundred thousand. But it should inspire a comparative judgment: there are hundreds and indeed thousands whom, in our concern with the horrors of execution, we forget: on the one hand, the victims of violence; on the other, the prisoners in our jails.

The victims are easy to forget. Social science tends steadily to mark a preference for the troubled, the abnormal, the problem case. Whether it is poverty, mental disorder, delinquency or crime, the "patient material" monopolizes the interest of increasing groups of people among the most generous and learned. Psychiatry and moral liberalism go together; the application of law as we have known it is thus coming to be regarded as an historic prelude to social work, which may replace it entirely. Modern literature makes the most of this same outlook, caring only for the disturbed spirit, scorning as bourgeois those who pay their way and do *not* stab their friends. All the while the determinism of natural science reinforces the assumption that society causes its own evils. A French jurist, for example, says that in order to understand crime we must first brush aside all ideas of Responsibility. He means the criminal's and takes for granted that of society. The murderer kills because reared in a broken home or, conversely, because at an early age he witnessed his parents making love. Out of such cases, which make pathetic reading in the literature of modern criminology, is born the abolitionist's state of

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mind: we dare not kill those we are beginning to understand so well.

If, moreover, we turn to the accounts of the crimes committed by these unfortunates, who are the victims? Only dull ordinary people going about their business. We are sorry, of course, but they do not interest science on its march. Balancing, for example, the sixty to seventy criminals executed annually in the United States, there were the seventy to eighty housewives whom George Cvek robbed, raped and usually killed during the months of a career devoted to proving his virility. "It is too bad." Cvek alone seems instructive, even though one of the law officers who helped track him down quietly remarks: "As to the extent that his villainies disturbed family relationships, or how many women are still haunted by the specter of an experience they have never disclosed to another living soul, these questions can only lend themselves to sterile conjecture."

The remote results are beyond our ken, but it is not idle to speculate about those whose death by violence fills the daily two inches at the back of respectable newspapers—the old man sunning himself on a park bench and beaten to death by four hoodlums, the small children abused and strangled, the middle-aged ladies on a hike assaulted and killed, the family terrorized by a released or escaped lunatic, the half-dozen working people massacred by the sudden maniac, the boatload of persons dispatched by the skipper, the mindless assaults upon schoolteachers and shopkeepers by the increasing horde of dedicated killers in our great cities. Where does the sanctity of life begin?

It is all very well to say that many of these killers are themselves "children," that is, minors. Doubtless a nine-year-old mind is housed in that 150 pounds of unguided muscle. Grant, for argument's sake, that the misdeed is "the fault of society," trot out the broken home and the slum environment. The question then is, What shall we do, not in the Utopian city of tomorrow, but here and now? The "scientific" means of cure are more than uncertain. The apparatus of detention only increases the killer's antisocial animus. Reformatories and mental hospitals are full and have an understandable bias toward discharging their inmates. Some of

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these are indeed "cured"—so long as they stay under a rule. The stress of the social free-for-all throws them back on their violent modes of self-expression. At that point I agree that society has failed—twice: it has twice failed the victims, whatever may be its guilt toward the killer.

As in all great questions, the moralist must choose, and choosing has a price. I happen to think that if a person of adult body has not been endowed with adequate controls against irrationally taking the life of another, that person must be judicially, painlessly, regretfully killed before that mindless body's horrible automation repeats.

I say "irrationally" taking life, because it is often possible to feel great sympathy with a murderer. Certain *crimes passionnels* can be forgiven without being condoned. Blackmailers invite direct retribution. Long provocation can be an excuse, as in that engaging case of some years ago, in which a respectable carpenter of seventy found he could no longer stand the incessant nagging of his wife. While she excoriated him from her throne in the kitchen—a daily exercise for fifty years—the husband went to his bench and came back with a hammer in each hand to settle the score. The testimony to his character, coupled with the sincerity implied by the two hammers, was enough to have him sent into quiet and brief seclusion.

But what are we to say of the type of motive disclosed in a journal published by the inmates of one of our Federal penitentiaries? The author is a bank robber who confesses that money is not his object:

> My mania for power, socially, sexually, and otherwise can feel no degree of satisfaction until I feel sure I have struck the ultimate of submission and terror in the minds and bodies of my victims. . . . It's very difficult to explain all the queer fascinating sensations pounding and surging through me while I'm holding a gun on a victim, watching his body tremble and sweat. . . . This is the moment when all the rationalized hypocrisies of civilization are suddenly swept away and two men stand there facing each other morally and ethically naked, and right and wrong are the absolute commands of the man behind the gun.

This confused echo of modern literature and modern science defines the choice before us. Anything deserving the name of cure

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for such a man presupposes not only a laborious individual psychoanalysis, with the means to conduct and to sustain it, socially and economically, but also a re-education of the mind, so as to throw into correct perspective the garbled ideas of Freud and Nietzsche, Gide and Dostoevski, which this power-seeker and his fellows have derived from the culture and temper of our times. Ideas are tenacious and give continuity to emotion. Failing a second birth of heart and mind, we must ask: How soon will this sufferer sacrifice a bank clerk in the interests of making civilization less hypocritical? And we must certainly question the wisdom of affording him more than one chance. The abolitionists' advocacy of an unconditional "let live" is in truth part of the same cultural tendency that animates the killer. The Western peoples' revulsion from power in domestic and foreign policy has made of the state a sort of counterpart of the bank robber: both having power and neither knowing how to use it. Both waste lives because hypnotized by irrelevant ideas and crippled by contradictory emotions. If psychiatry were sure of its ground in diagnosing the individual case, a philosopher might consider whether such dangerous obsessions should not be guarded against by judicial homicide *before* the shooting starts.

I raise the question not indeed to recommend the prophylactic execution of potential murderers, but to introduce the last two perplexities that the abolitionists dwarf or obscure by their concentration on changing an isolated penalty. One of these is the scale by which to judge the offenses society wants to repress. I can for example imagine a truly democratic state in which it would be deemed a form of treason punishable by death to create a disturbance in any court or deliberative assembly. The aim would be to recognize the sanctity of orderly discourse in arriving at justice, assessing criticism and defining policy. Under such a law, a natural selection would operate to remove permanently from the scene persons who, let us say, neglect argument in favor of banging on the desk with their shoe. Similarly, a bullying minority in a diet, parliament or skupshtina would be prosecuted for treason to the most sacred institutions when fists or flying inkwells replace rhetoric. That the mere suggestion of such a law sounds ludicrous

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shows how remote we are from civilized institutions, and hence how gradual should be our departure from the severity of judicial homicide.

I say gradual and I do not mean standing still. For there is one form of barbarity in our law that I want to see mitigated before any other. I mean imprisonment. The enemies of capital punishment—and liberals generally—seem to be satisfied with any legal outcome so long as they themselves avoid the vicarious guilt of shedding blood. They speak of the sanctity of life, but have no concern with its quality. They give no impression of ever having read what it is certain they have read, from Wilde's *De Profundis* to the latest account of prison life by a convicted homosexual. Despite the infamy of concentration camps, despite Mr. Charles Burney's remarkable work, *Solitary Confinement*, despite riots in prisons, despite the round of escape, recapture and return in chains, the abolitionists' imagination tells them nothing about the reality of being caged. They read without a qualm, indeed they read with rejoicing, the hideous irony of "Killer Gets Life"; they sigh with relief instead of horror. They do not see and suffer the cell, the drill, the clothes, the stench, the food; they do not feel the sexual racking of young and old bodies, the hateful promiscuity, the insane monotony, the mass degradation, the impotent hatred. They do not remember from Silvio Pellico that only a strong political faith, with a hope of final victory, can steel a man to endure long detention. They forget that Joan of Arc, when offered "life," preferred burning at the stake. Quite of another mind, the abolitionists point with pride to the "model prisoners" that murderers often turn out to be. As if a model prisoner were not, first, a contradiction in terms, and second, an exemplar of what a free society should not want.

I said a moment ago that the happy advocates of the life sentence appear not to have understood what we know they have read. No more do they appear to read what they themselves write. In the preface to his useful volume of cases, *Hanged in Error,* Mr. Leslie Hale, M.P., refers to the tardy recognition of a minor miscarriage of justice—one year in jail: "The prisoner emerged to find that his wife had died and that his children and his aged parents had been removed to the workhouse. By the time a small payment had been assessed as 'compensation' the victim was in-

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curably insane." So far we are as indignant with the law as Mr. Hale. But what comes next? He cites the famous Evans case, in which it is very probable that the wrong man was hanged, and he exclaims: "While such mistakes are possible, should society impose an irrevocable sentence?" Does Mr. Hale really ask us to believe that the sentence passed on the first man, whose wife died and who went insane, was in any sense *revocable*? Would not any man rather be Evans dead than that other wretch "emerging" with his small compensation and his reasons for living gone?

Nothing is revocable here below, imprisonment least of all. The agony of a trial itself is punishment, and acquittal wipes out nothing. Read the heart-rending diary of William Wallace, accused quite implausibly of having murdered his wife and "saved" by the Court of Criminal Appeals—but saved for what? Brutish ostracism by everyone and a few years of solitary despair. The cases of Adolf Beck, of Oscar Slater, of the unhappy Brooklyn bank teller who vaguely resembled a forger and spent eight years in Sing Sing only to "emerge" a broken, friendless, useless, "compensated" man—all these, if the dignity of the individual has any meaning, had better have been dead before the prison door ever opened for them. This is what counsel always says to the jury in the course of a murder trial and counsel is right: far better hang this man than "give him life." For my part, I would choose death without hesitation. If that option is abolished, a demand will one day be heard to claim it as a privilege in the name of human dignity. I shall believe in the abolitionist's present views only after he has emerged from twelve months in a convict cell.

The detached observer may want to interrupt here and say that the argument has now passed from reasoning to emotional preference. Whereas the objector to capital punishment *feels* that death is the greatest of evils, I *feel* that imprisonment is worse than death. A moment's thought will show that feeling is the appropriate arbiter. All reasoning about what is right, civilized and moral rests upon sentiment, like mathematics. Only, in trying to persuade others, it is important to single out the fundamental feeling, the prime intuition, and from it to reason justly. In my view, to profess respect for human life and be willing to see it spent in a penitentiary is to entertain liberal feelings frivolously. To op-

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pose the death penalty because, unlike a prison term, it is irrevocable is to argue fallaciously.

In the propaganda for abolishing the death sentence the recital of numerous miscarriages of justice commits the same error and implies the same callousness: what is at fault in our present system is not the sentence but the fallible procedure. Capital cases being one in a thousand or more, who can be cheerful at the thought of all the "revocable" errors? What the miscarriages point to is the need for reforming the jury system, the rules of evidence, the customs of prosecution, the machinery of appeal. The failure to see that this is the great task reflects the sentimentality I spoke of earlier, that which responds chiefly to the excitement of the unusual. A writer on Death and the Supreme Court is at pains to point out that when that tribunal reviews a capital case, the judges are particularly anxious and careful. What a left-handed compliment to the highest judicial conscience of the country! Fortunately, some of the champions of the misjudged see the issue more clearly. Many of those who are thought wrongly convicted now languish in jail because the jury was uncertain or because a doubting governor commuted the death sentence. Thus Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, Jr., convicted of his wife's murder in the second degree is serving a sentence that is supposed to run for the term of his natural life. The story of his numerous trials, as told by Mr. Paul Holmes, suggests that police incompetence, newspaper demagogy, public envy of affluence and the mischances of legal procedure fashioned the result. But Dr. Sheppard's vindicator is under no illusion as to the conditions that this "lucky" evader of the electric chair will face if he is granted parole after ten years: "It will carry with it no right to resume his life as a physician. His privilege to practice medicine was blotted out with his conviction. He must all his life bear the stigma of a parolee, subject to unceremonious return to confinement for life for the slightest misstep. More than this, he must live out his life as a convicted murderer."

What does the moral conscience of today think it is doing? If such a man is a dangerous repeater of violent acts, what right has the state to let him loose after ten years? What is, in fact, the meaning of a "life sentence" that peters out long before life? Paroling looks suspiciously like an expression of social remorse for the pain

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of incarceration, coupled with a wish to avoid "unfavorable publicity" by freeing a suspect. The man is let out when the fuss has died down; which would mean that he was not under lock and key for our protection at all. He *was* being punished, just a little —for so prison seems in the abolitionist's distorted view, and in the jury's and the prosecutor's, whose "second-degree" murder suggests killing someone "just a little."*

If, on the other hand, execution and life imprisonment are judged too severe and the accused is expected to be harmless hereafter—punishment being ruled out as illiberal—what has society gained by wrecking his life and damaging that of his family?

What we accept, and what the abolitionist will clamp upon us all the more firmly if he succeeds, is an incoherence which is not remedied by the belief that second-degree murder merits a kind of second-degree death; that a doubt as to the identity of a killer is resolved by commuting real death into intolerable life; and that our ignorance whether a maniac will strike again can be hedged against by measuring "good behavior" within the gates and then releasing the subject upon the public in the true spirit of experimentation.

These are some of the thoughts I find I cannot escape when I read and reflect upon this grave subject. If, as I think, they are relevant to any discussion of change and reform, resting as they do on the direct and concrete perception of what happens, then the simple meliorists who expect to breathe a purer air by abolishing the death penalty are deceiving themselves and us. The issue is for the public to judge; but I for one shall not sleep easier for knowing that in England and America and the West generally a hundred more human beings are kept alive in degrading conditions to face a hopeless future; while others—possibly less conscious, certainly less controlled—benefit from a premature freedom dangerous alike to themselves and society. In short, I derive no comfort from the illusion that in giving up one manifest protection of the law-abiding, we who might well be in any of these three roles—victim, prisoner, licensed killer—have struck a blow for the sanctity of human life.

* The British Homicide Act of 1957, Section 2, implies the same reasoning in its definition of "diminished responsibility" for certain forms of mental abnormality. The whole question of irrationality and crime is in utter confusion, on both sides of the Atlantic.

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The World With Both Eyes Open

WALTER KERR

ONE OF THE MOST DISAPPOINTING THINGS about the human condition is that the pleasures of the flesh offer no real antidote to the distresses of the mind. It is agreeable that man has not yet evolved into pure spirit. But, as it happens, man's mind has by this time achieved a degree of complexity even greater than that of his astonishingly complex body, which means that his mind makes demands his sensual equipment cannot hope to satisfy. Sensuality can provide him with a brief nirvana—a consummation perhaps not to be despised—but it cannot nourish what it tends, temporarily, to obliterate.

In a practical sense this should be clear enough to us from the fact that we live in an age that is highly permissive in sexual matters—our taboos are surely fewer than those that inhibited our fathers—but also in an age that is extraordinarily conscious of its intellectual unrest. The fleshpots are exactly as attractive as they always have been, and no doubt are a good bit easier to come by: the visual world about us is largely made up of handsome commercial invitations to ladies, liquor and lazy days on the beach. But the fleshpots, even when they are visited and not merely yearned for, seem to brew very little in the way of sustained contentment; they give rise, rather surprisingly, to a fury. The most disenchanted face one sees in the newspapers is the face of the playboy who ought, by the standards enunciated in all of those commercial invitations, to have had the most fun. (He has had fun, too, and let's not pretend that he hasn't. Why hasn't it been enough for him?)

The restiveness that stirs, ungratefully, in a flesh-coddled time

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is likely to get worse. There are two things we can be fairly sure of. One is that our work is going to get harder, not easier. The other is that its nature is going to be increasingly intellectual. As these developments continue, the disproportion between the restoration the mind cries out for and the relief the flesh is able to provide cannot help but grow. The feeling of physical well-being that follows upon the honest exercise of an honest instinct is apt to wither earlier in the day when the day is principally determined to pick a man's brains.

There is a further problem here. The athleticism of which our minds are capable is now not only more complex than that of our physical reflexes. It is also of a higher and more influential order. That is to say, the flesh becomes aware that it is being warmed in a somewhat dumb and humble and submissive way, like a kitten purring. But the mind, being a reflective instrument, is able to be inside a pleasure and outside that pleasure at one and the same time, behaving and knowing how it is behaving simultaneously; it is even able to glance down and understand a physical pleasure, whereas a physical pleasure has no talent for glancing up. Being so powerfully conscious, it is able to dominate all that is sensual—to control it, and also to corrupt it. Men have spoken forever of the mind's power to control the senses in the interests of a belief; very little has as yet been said about the mind's power to corrupt the senses in the interests of a belief. Yet an unease of the mind can infect an instinct to the point where it virtually disables it.

We are aware of this, and sporting enough to make a joke of it, in isolated instances that strike us as accidents: we have discovered, by this time, that a bad state of mind can make for thoroughly bad sex. Nature is not automatically triumphant over a stubbornly agitated brain.

It may not, however, have occurred to us how extensively our present intellectual dissatisfaction—in essence, our doubt that values are real—has jaundiced our view of the very sensual experiences we profess most to admire.

We do lay some claim, in this century, to being relatively healthy in our attitudes toward sex. We do not hide it under the ottoman, as the Victorians did. We insist that its existence be

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acknowledged, and in the acknowledgment honored. We do not find sex embarrassing, a sort of evolutionary hand-me-down. So far from viewing it with shame, we are ready to give three hurrahs for it: sex is an act that is beautiful in itself and beautiful in all its implications. Nor are we content any longer with the notion that it is something suitable enough for the male, whom the female must merely accommodate. The pleasures of sex are the birthright of women as well, as monthly magazine articles triumphantly announce. Meaning to honor our natures as our natures are, and to honor them in clear good conscience, we approach the subject of sex in a candid, generous, accepting and even admiring manner.

In the course of asserting the dignity and desirability of a natural act, we have been understandably eager to free our art forms from the artificial silences imposed by Victorianism so that they would come to reflect our own new honesty and our own new joy. We have freed them. But the reflection is most strange. What do our novels and our plays show back to us? Almost without exception an image of sex that is violent, frustrated, shabby, furtive, degrading, treacherous and—more and more—aberrant. The heroine has taken lovers on the lawn beyond counting; she ends in an asylum. The countess requires the ministrations of a homosexual if her nerves are not to give way; his give way, and he hangs himself. The hero finds gratification with a twelve-year-old child, who is more accomplished than he is; she ends a slattern and he a convict. The virile ex-soldier is close to being spastic because he knows that all women want to "cut it off," the suburban husband is hopelessly and impossibly enamored of the baby-sitter, the wife of a distinguished lawyer futilely says "yes" to a stranger in an elevator, one teen-ager is being raped near a wire fence and another is returning from the abortionist, and there is no lasting love in a summer place. The little college teacher hops on one foot outside his best friend's bedroom, asking in a piping voice, "Are they doing it?" while a girl abandoned by the sailor who has made her pregnant asks sniggeringly of a homosexual friend, "But what do they *do*?" The sex act is not always unromantically conceived: it may come as a brief prelude to the disintegration of a woman's life, a fling before she turns on the unlit gas heater, or as a respite for a couple who

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must thereafter separate, he to return to an insane wife and she to an indifferent husband. But even when the interlude serves as emotional relief, it is apt to take place in an oppressive atmosphere and a seedy environment; when it is over, its effects are at best ambiguous and at worst distasteful to the people involved. For the most part, as we spy upon sex we seem to be spying upon failure. The sky is overcast, and the woman waiting in a doctor's office to be fitted with a diaphragm is not so much an awakened partner as an outpatient of Hell.

What we proclaim as noble we present as nasty. If no Victorian ever said so much about sex, no Victorian ever said anything so unpleasant about sex. Dante made Hell itself a more comforting place than this.

Now I should like to bypass, as best we are able, any discussion of the possible ethical implications of the wild contradiction in which we are embroiled. The moralist may very well see in these self-flagellating images the unbidden stir of our consciences in a time of too much license, an instinctive insistence upon telling the real truth no matter what announcements we have been making. The moralist may very well be right. He could not, in any case, ask a better advertisement for his cause. It is doubtful that Savonarola himself, thundering from his pulpit, could have painted a starker or more discouraging portrait of the bad end we were to come to than our "entertainments," generally, now offer us.

I am not interested here in our sexual behavior. Chances are that few of us have flirted with excess to the point where the jeremiad that is hurled at us from page and stage is altogether deserved, or to the point where the "decadence" set before us is instantly recognized because we were involved in just such a mess last night. As the drunken, drugged heroine crawls out of bed calling for her oxygen mask, which is brought to her by a hero who has begun his career by giving his true love a venereal disease and who is going to end it by being castrated, we probably do not lean toward our companion in the theater and murmur, "Fred should see this—I've told him and told him." Not seriously, anyway.

I am interested in an attitude, in a state of mind that accepts this nearly universal image as being more or less appropriate, about

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what is to be expected, in a state of mind that gives detached credence—no matter what our own experience, good or bad, licit or illicit, extensive or limited, may have been—to a landscape that looks like a nightmare. I am interested, additionally, in the lie we seem to give ourselves, one way or the other, in the fact that we give formal assent, in our pronouncements, to an act regarded as beautiful while giving formal assent, in our images, to the same act regarded as ugly. Which of these things do we truly believe, which represents our genuine conviction?

Forced to vote, I am afraid I should have to come down in favor of the mirror as the truer record of our minds; it is much easier to spot a lie in a play or a story than it is in a conversation. Unless I have overlooked a sizeable body of contemporary literature in which sex is seen to be precisely as healthy an activity as we proclaim it to be, I am compelled to conclude that no matter what our voices say when we are talking for effect, when the eye of the mind begins to do its work it photographs sex as a dubious pleasure. With the click of the shutter there is a sound of doubt.

The eye of the mind has a bias that will not yield to rhetoric. We have been proud to give praise to the flesh. But our paintings, now that we notice them, seem not to have heard us. There is very little flesh, and less really luscious flesh, in them. We shout what we think; but they show us what we know.

Or, rather, they show us the shape of our doubt. Our minds come equipped with doubt rods as effective as divining rods these days, especially where the possibility of pleasure is concerned. It is as though we had been provided with x-ray machines for detecting forgeries, as art experts are, and as though we were able to apply them, instantly and infallibly, to every promise of being pleased, or moved, or rewarded. How alert we are to the least vibration that promises to unmask a fake, and how eager we are to embrace any hint that we are really deceiving ourselves whenever we are enjoying ourselves! The pejorative phrase has not yet been coined that is sufficiently disillusioning for us; after we have gobbled up this latest one, we shall go find another.

In reviewing a volume of literary criticism, Malcolm Cowley has described some of the instructions we give ourselves:

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Never say friendship; say "innocent homosexuality." Never say curiosity; say "voyeurism," or refer to the curious man as a "castrated peeper".... Instead of self-awareness, speak of "narcissism." Remember that fun and games do not exist in the Freudian world except as "the symbolic enactment of sado-masochistic desires." Remember that family affection is merely "a repressed incestuous longing" and that chastity is "the morbid fear of full genital development." A tomboy is a "transvestite" and a writer is—what?

Not all of these things are pleasures, of course, although most of them are at least distantly related and it comes as no surprise to find "fun and games" at their center. What the grouping does indicate, however, is the degree to which ordinarily spontaneous, outgoing, instinctive responses are at the mercy of a mind that has reached a controlling conclusion: the conclusion that all value resides in the abstract ratios, the theoretical equations, of our cerebral manipulation of things, and that no value is to be discovered by merely playful contact with the things themselves, whether those things be stone or salt water or flesh. There is no hiding out from an overriding conviction: not for sex, not for fun and games, not for friendship. If the conviction maintains that pleasure itself is unreal, it will in due time take the pleasures of sex and climbing trees and seeing the family again along to the intellectually conceived graveyard. An infection begun in the mind will reach every extremity.

Conversely, there is no solving the problem at the extremities, either in the flight to the bedroom or the flight to the barroom, certainly not high in the branches of the old apple tree: the wasteland is already there, waiting. Until the mind can be convinced that pleasure is meaningful, until it can feel that pleasure is just, until it can quite simply and plainly be pleased with itself, there will be cakes and ale for nobody.

It is no doubt a mistake for me to mention cakes and ale at this point, for that is just what we conceive our pleasures to be: desserts, things we can and should do without. (Are we trying in all those novels and plays to convince ourselves that we should do with less sex, in all those paintings that we should care less for the flesh?) Pleasure itself is something more than that. Being pleased in our

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minds with our minds and with our bodies and with all that our minds think and our bodies do is something more than that. It is an interior experience of the rectitude of things, a seen certainty of the consonance of things. When I become aware that I am in harmony with my own being, I am pleased. When I become aware that I am in harmony with all other or any other being, I am pleased. One often thinks of pleasure as the satisfaction of an appetite, which it is. But what is the appetite, traced to its ultimate source, and what does "satisfaction" mean? The appetite is for fulfillment, completion. To "satisfy" means "to fulfill the needs, expectations, wishes, or desires of . . . to suffice, fulfill, or answer the requirements or conditions of." Insofar as I am, I have requirements that must be met if I am to continue to be. When they are met—when they are satisfied as a true measurement in architecture is said to satisfy or as a just judgment in a court is said to give satisfaction—I am made fully myself, and it is this rightness, this perfect conformity of requirement and response, that I call my pleasure. Tracing the origins of the word "pleasure," one comes upon a curious early equivalent: agreement, mutual understanding. When I am in the right place, and all the world fits me, I am pleased.

In this ultimate sense of the word, pleasure becomes one of the mainsprings of the will. Certain that I am not a displaced person in a universe indifferent to me, I am able to move about in it. But if I have no direct, deep experience of how much the universe and I agree, I shall doubt the likelihood of our ever coming to a mutual understanding and so become either immobilized or very angry. The immobility is linked, fore and aft, to apathy; and there is a surprising apathy in some sections of the world today. The anger, conscious that movement is still possible but convinced that it is essentially random and therefore incapable of being satisfied, explodes into activity that is, and in the circumstances cannot help but be, irrational; we read of the irrational act, whether it is a private act or a vast public one, more and more often these mornings. Being pleased is not a matter of being titillated; it is a condition of being willing to go on. "No man can exist without pleasure," said Aquinas, and we may bump head-on into the appalling discovery that we cannot, or—if the hour has grown late—that we could not.

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I do see that these remarks attach what seems an excessive importance to an experience we think of as trivial. Therein lies our greatest stumbling block just now: a profound requirement of our natures is fixed in our minds as superficial.

Just as we equate "recreation" with the recreation room and not with rebirth—which is what the structure of the word truly signifies—so we habitually speak of pleasure as though all its implications were idle. "Well, one has to get some pleasure out of life" is not a proudly held creed; it is an excuse, uttered by way of apology for an evasion of responsibility one is contemplating but of which one is transparently ashamed. Here is life on one side, over here. It is something to be got through, and the assumption is that getting through it will in no way be pleasing. But by the time one dies, one ought to have slipped in a few odd hours of dereliction of duty. A man is entitled to cheat a little along the way.

The roots of the word "pleasure," wriggling this way and that over the centuries, have taken a variety of turns, and some of these have headed in our direction. The medical term "placebo," for instance, is an offshoot of the Latin for "to afford satisfaction or happiness," and it suits our present understanding well. A placebo is "a medicine given merely to humor the patient; especially, a preparation containing no medicine but given for its psychological effect." That indeed is how we look upon the whole matter of delight: partly as coddling, partly as fraud, altogether as something from which true substance is missing.

But now we must face up to the implications of our attitudes; it is time to be entirely honest with ourselves. We hold two attitudes, and they are deadlocked. One is that, because we have been unable to provide pleasure with a value, pleasure is insubstantial, illusory. The other is that the value we do acknowledge, the abstract value we give to the thoughtful ratios of our labor, has also, and in spite of us, come to seem insubstantial, illusory. Between two negations, between two pathways felt to be slippery, is there no firm earth we can ever get beneath our feet?

Or is it possible that firmness, security, confidence and joy in this most mysterious universe depend upon our willingness always to walk both paths at once, always to advance one foot on the right

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side and the other on the left so that we shall keep from toppling either way, always to accept the fact that the only way we can have one world is to admit and to honor the existence of two? There is a famous Chaplin image, at the end of a film called *The Pilgrim*. Chaplin has been ordered out of one country, literally kicked over the border. But across the border he is caught in the murderous crossfire of bandits engaged in guerrilla warfare. Where to turn? Swiftly shrugging his shoulders, he decides. The last we see of him he is deftly and philosophically shuffling away from us, straight down the border line, one oversize shoe safely planted in this country, the other safely planted in that.

I say "safely." But of course there is something very tentative, eternally unresolved, in his teeter-totter journey to the horizon. And there is something about tentativeness, about teeter-tottering, that we do not like to allow in our own lives. We prefer to get things straight, to get things settled, to discover a single efficient way of hitching all we must deal with into single harness. We like to be single-minded, to have one rule of thumb, to define all that is diverse in the same simple set of terms if we can possibly do it. The world is easier to manage that way, we feel.

But what if there is no single way to manage the world, no simple way of holding onto anything quite so supple—what if we are trying to lift a cobra with one hand when it really takes two? What if the world is as solid as rock and as yielding as water at one and the same time, and man a creature who needs the rock to sit on and the water to get under? What if man himself is essentially unresolved—partly granite and partly mercury, immaterial as his thought and material as his toenails, an unfinished sum and an unfinished symphony, an eternal spectacle in the mismatched socks he is wearing—and what if it is precisely in his failure, or his refusal, to define himself absolutely and to commit himself forever that his flexibility, his power of inventiveness and his exuberance lie?

We are now being given hints that if this were the case, it would be an excellent thing. I once quoted Chardin on the flexibility and playfulness of the kitten. I did not mention then that the very advance the kitten, like its cousin mammals, represented in the evolutionary development of life stemmed from its superb sloppiness, its

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frisky escape from the drive toward automated perfection. It had left behind it, and well beneath it, a much better organized species, the single-minded insect. With the mammal, Chardin remarks, "instinct is no longer narrowly canalised, as in the spider or the bee, paralysed to a single function. . . . We are dealing with an entirely different form of instinct in fact, and one not subject to *the limitations imposed upon the tool by the precision it has attained.*"

The insect had been strict with itself, honed each of its parts to a specific function, tolerated no nonsense in the process of its self-organization. Having sorted out all things singly, and having coordinated them toward a single end, the busy bee and the admirable spider completed themselves—and thereby froze themselves. Out of perfection of a kind came a kind of death: the insect had formed itself absolutely and was now able to sustain itself indefinitely—but it could make no further contribution to anything outside itself or better than itself. The mammal, "no longer completely the slave" of its methodology, kept a response or two open—undetermined, uncommitted, untamable, elusive—and it was the open responses that enabled it to participate in further adventures. A loose character, the kitten.

If we are to believe the paleontologists, then, the looseness we notice in the strange ambiguity of our lives is one of the luckiest things we possess: something to be cherished, *as looseness,* rather than to be regretted as awkward. If we are at our present stage of development forced to do some things with one tool and some things with another, forced to labor on the boss's time and make love on our own, forced to advance upon the universe with both arms open and each hand prepared to make a rather different gesture, our advance in nature and in grace is not over. Something ahead of us invites us to test it this way and that, to strike it and to stroke it, to assault it and to steal up on it. If it is complex, we are still flexible and apt to surprise it in the unexpectedness of our approach. With a roller skate on one foot and a hiking boot on the other we can switch tactics, which is how engagements are happily won.

But if we are ambidextrous wrestlers in a multiform world, doing some things intuitively and some things doggedly, now danc-

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ing about the arena and now showing what a straight line we can walk, where in all of this uninterrupted sparring can substance lie waiting for us? Must we posit that, given our odd natures and their apparent suitability to an equally odd universe, substance exists for us in the dimension that leaps into being when the two faces of the world are seen in a shimmering superimposition, one relieving the other with shade and the other lifting its companion into light? This is admittedly an unstable image for an unstable condition; the two do not absolutely merge, we cannot have the universe whole in one fell swoop. The two meet, and shield each other, and illuminate and shadow each other, in a meeting that is not quite a fusion; it is as evanescent as an eclipse, although it may be as thrilling. Are we vouchsafed the certainty of a sun and moon only while they are brushing contours, exchanging darkness and glow, fleetingly and ungraspingly making two faces one? Perhaps it is intolerable that substance, and value, and all promise should be as impermanently and dizzyingly known as this. But perhaps it is also the guarantee of our continued mobility, our malleability, our throbbing sensitivity to impressions that are themselves throbbing with life, a guarantee of our active partnership with an active, growing, changing, hallooing universe. Here nothing is frozen, not in our heads, not in the skies. We buzz and bend and beam together as we play hide and seek until dawn.

And see where we are, if any of this is so. Suppose that an eternal, hide-and-seek, mysteriously creative duality *is* so, a duality of thinking and seeing, of abstract and concrete, of action and contemplation, of cerebration and intuition, of work and play, of profit and pleasure, of assertion and surrender, and that our confidence and our exhilaration depend upon an alternating exercise of dual tools upon a double face—an exercise so regular and so rhythmic in its alternation that we come to have a lively sense of the sustained presence of both, finding substance in their iridescent interplay.

In that case we are ready, at this precise moment in time, to declare ourselves a bonus. We have achieved a high degree of skill in one kind of groping, the hard kind, the theoretical kind. Our futures now depend upon a most attractive activity, upon our de-

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veloping a matching skill in the easy kind, the loving kind, the arm-in-arm kind. Praiseworthy as we are in the work we have been doing, and certain as it is that more work will have to be done, our freedom to grow in stature rests unconditionally upon our ability to play. To keep our minds supple and the universe in focus we are requested, most cordially, to exercise just those intellectual instincts that tend—in their contemplative listening and their intuitive rejoicing—to produce pleasure.

Can pleasure, then, be said to have a value, a value at least half as big as the total capital available to us, a value big enough to give us permission to pursue it? Intellectually speaking, I think so. It is, in essence, the value of The Other.

How much we have neglected The Other, and how strainingly we yearn for it, is not always clear to us. It is not clear to us because we have not fully realized how much of a burden, and how unnecessary a burden, we have conscientiously placed upon The Self.

When we decided that all value was extrinsic, and that no value was intrinsic or actually *in* things, we accepted a private responsibility that might well be called intolerable. We said that all that was touchable and all that was visible—from the grass outside the window to the face looking up at us from a chair across the room—was neutral, and that worth was something we constructed for it in the adding machines of our heads. But this meant—although we barely noticed the implication—that all that was real, all that was worthwhile, all that was valuable, was in *us*—in the equations we manufactured in the busy switchboard of our brains. Whatever vitality or continuity the universe possessed came from *us*. We were its guarantor, its prop, its collateral, its claim to being. Like a willing, although perspiring, Atlas we carried it on our shoulders; the moment we ceased our cerebration, the moment we stopped supplying it with fresh charges in the shape of formulas, it would drop. The world about us, the womb in which we grew, had no other source of energy, no powers of its own. Each of us, in the individuality of his thinking mind, had perforce to accept the responsibility not simply of knowing the universe but of creating it—abstractly—and of perpetually maintaining it in the sustained tension of his thought.

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Without being in the least egocentric, we had got ourselves in the position of the man who does not trust airplanes and who therefore does one wholly unnecessary thing: he gets a grip under the armrests attached to his seat and helps hold the plane up.

To acknowledge the presence, the independence, the energy and in some way the reality of The Other is to begin to put down the burden that makes us most lonely, most isolated, most exhausted —and to begin to take pleasure in the comfort, the mutual support, the "oh, *there* you are!" of friends.

The Other is that warmth in a field that would make the ground thaw and the wheat grow if I never happened by; when I do happen by, it is not waiting for the support of my thought but for the impress of my foot. It is that moment in a conversation when, toward the end of the evening, the few who are present sit back and realize, with a quiet leap of the heart, that each has touched something in the other and not merely imposed a rattle of entertainment upon him. It is a living face noticed across the aisle in a theater in which slightly parted lips and intent eyes and head held poised all, together, speak of a completeness I could not add to, or a face in oil, or carved in marble, that lifts the oil from dead cloth and the marble from the earth. Even when he is painting a self-portrait the artist must be stunned by the otherness he has trapped: this is he, but it is different from what he had thought. The Other is in this curious book we are reading in which an adolescent we have never known and could not have imagined does very strange things and confesses to very strange thoughts that bring him closer in his strangeness than our own children are in their familiarity. It is in Bach's unfathomable chase, so urgent that there is almost not time to space the notes, after something that will escape him with a cry if he does not hurry; but he hurries, and it is still just there. It is in the movement that is not made in a dance, because the dancer is patiently permitting the invisible to pass him. What did you think the clown was crying about? He saw perfection, and it was not in him, it was somewhere else. And did you think he was unhappy, crying? No. That kind of crying is a kind of happiness.

I am pleased in that instant when I discover that I am not alone. My joy, like the discovery, is profound.

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POEMS

MARY ELLEN JOHANSEN

Hail!

The day the bells rang the woods,
The trees clashed and broke the day
In planes of sound.
The sun swung through in golden clappers,
Trumpets wound around and round,
The spiral statements stamped in brass.
Drums made groundswell under moss,
Cloud and clod tossed and recomposed
Old terms in hymn tunes,
Psalms so shining, grace in
Chords of stone and star.
In such music the progression
Is steadily to what we are.

When Love First Entered Me

When love first entered me I said
I don't fear death now.
A shout it made.
What I meant then went like this:
I hold this instant
God the star, dark light that lines
The spraying stalk,
The splitting leap of lip
Gone blind from staring through
Bent skin of sky,
Showering love,
Romancer of the silent answer,

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Who clangs his shield
To blaze off death
In a race arrested.

The film releases its ecstatic grasp.
We two move on in slow dissolve,
Parting sand like
Slicing through an orchard,
Or cleaving wheat.
There is no climax
When love and life are learned,
And death is not delayed
Beyond the magic fire.
Our progress has no end nor moment,
A flow without ebb or spring,
Its faith a stroboscopic strip
Of hands in light as firm as stone.

Big Rain

This was a thicker rain
Than we had looked for,
Bringing no clarity,
Which one can take,
But who would have thought
It could bring the whales inland,
Leaving them a humped astonishment,
And the harpoon marks red,
Far apart in the darkness.
For the hurts of whales are widely spaced,
Wounds a man might lie in
For the mutual solace
Of most direct and breathing truth.
But prudence presses its finger

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Against such parted lips to say
Let these clotting clouds
Dress the redness,
And pursue your meaning more remotely
Across next morning's mended sky.

The Birds at Dawn

The birds at dawn fill in a mesh,
A net hung out with squairs for choirs,
And they intone a spring of hours
Early in the bursting year.
The throats and beaks that sang the vine out
Break liquid drillings through the fretwork,
Sweets pressed and odors squeezed
In the lattice of the brain.
They seal the great comb of their work
With gilded flies stuck out to heaven,
Bait immobile but persuasive,
Sucking time on reefs of gold.
In calms of autumn birds call back
The buds as fruit and hope to catch
Late bees. Their wings brush quick tonalities
To stack a harvest in the air
Before the cold cuts down the chorus
And bares the ever-standing staves.

✪ MARY ELLEN JOHANSEN says of her work: "I wrote poetry and won a few prizes in school and college. A long drought followed, but I began writing again about seven years ago. These poems were worked and reworked during this period."

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Limitations of U. S. Policy Toward the Underdeveloped World

A Note on the Sociology of Revolution

BERNARD KIERNAN

ONE OF THE CENTRAL TENETS of modern social psychology is that juvenile delinquents are made, not born; that is, society creates juvenile delinquents by creating the conditions that breed delinquency, and if society wishes to eliminate delinquency, it must begin by eliminating these conditions.

> If we wish to have fewer delinquents, or if we wish to modify the mode of life of those who already are delinquents, a way must be found to modify those aspects of the community life which provide the appropriate setting for delinquency careers.[1]

This concept extends to the entire field of criminology, where one of the key ideas is that the only intelligent and successful way of dealing with crime is not through repressive and revengeful punishment, but through rehabilitation; better yet, crime should be stamped out at its source, in the blighted backwaters of society.

Social psychologists agree that the fundamental cause of antisocial behavior is rejection. This attitude was ably summarized by Franz Alexander in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry:* "Underprivileged members of an organized group who profit least from social cooperation will be the main offenders of peace and order." The key word here is "underprivileged." Social psychologists agree that "underprivileged" means primarily economic inferiority. As Mabel Elliott notes in *Crime in Modern Society:* ". . .

1 C. S. Shaw and D. C. McKay, "Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas," *The Problems of Delinquency,* ed. Sheldon Glueck (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959), p. 177.

✪ BERNARD KIERNAN teaches history and political science at Concord College. He writes, "My interest in international affairs comes naturally since my father served in the United States diplomatic service and consequently I spent most of my childhood, including part of World War II, in Europe."

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the relationship between low economic status and delinquency and crime is everywhere observable." The most fertile seedbed of crime is the slum.

Although the view I have sketched above is still met with a degree of hostility in many segments of society, it has become synonymous in contemporary sociology and psychology with enlightenment and with a "scientific" understanding of social forces. The same thinking has not extended to political science. Put somewhat differently, although sociologists and psychologists are convinced that the individual becomes antisocial because society does not care for him adequately, rejects him, there has been no corresponding belief at the level of what Marxists would call the class struggle. There has been surprisingly little recognition that economic classes, as a whole, also will be "offenders of peace and order" if the society to which they belong offers them little or no reward in return for their social cooperation. In short, we have numerous psychological theories "justifying" or explaining crime and delinquency, but none for socialism and the social revolution.

Let us take a concrete example, Cuba. In Cuba during the nearly thirty years of the Batista regime, the vast majority of the Cuban people derived few, if any, benefits from social cooperation. There is no doubt that the Batista government presented an opulent front, including luxurious hotels, plush gambling casinos and the most modern and efficient houses of prostitution. But the vast majority of Cubans did not share in these advantages. The average Cuban sugar worker had no opportunity to enjoy the pleasures of Havana, to squander the money he did not, and could not earn, in the gambling casinos; his children had little chance to use the fine beach resorts.

The social psychologist who is willing to recognize that slum conditions in Harlem or in Chicago are breeding grounds of crime, who is willing to admit that the underprivileged individual, whether in Harlem or in Cuba, is likely to become antisocial, seems unwilling to recognize these conditions as a cause for social revolution. Or at least he usually ignores that side of the picture which, presumably, is the reserve of the political scientist. But the

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political scientist, at least in this country, has had little to say, save to warn us of the dangers of communism and to tell us how to combat it. And to the political scientist, communism is limited to subversion from the Kremlin.

The point I am making is that those individuals who flocked to the banner of Fidel Castro, those who supported Mao Tse-tung in China, who supported Hitler in Germany, Mussolini in Italy, the Bolsheviks in Russia, the Commune in 1871, Louis Blanc in 1848, in short, all social revolutionaries, good or bad, well or ill-intentioned, share in common the belief that they have nothing to gain from social cooperation within the existing order. Is it any more surprising than in the case of delinquents and criminals that they should turn against that society? The difference between a mass social upheaval in Cuba and the isolated outbreaks of crime in American cities is a question of organization and purpose. The individual criminal, like the social revolutionary, comes to the conclusion that social cooperation is not worth the effort, that the rewards society proffers are not commensurate with the discipline it imposes. The individual criminal, however, does not go beyond rejection. He finds cooperation unprofitable and therefore rejects the very idea of social cooperation, or at best reverts to a simpler type of social organization expressed in gang loyalty. The social revolutionary, on the other hand, after concluding that social cooperation does not pay, adds the all-important qualification, *in this society*. In other words, the social revolutionary goes beyond rejection. He sets out to modify and reform the social structure in order to *make* social cooperation profitable.

The difference between the individual criminal and the individual who joins something like the 26th of July movement is, therefore, a difference not in motivation (the motivations are similar) but in political sophistication. The individual criminal is fatalistic and antisocial, in the sense that he has lost faith in humanity and strikes out in blind hostility at a social order that he does not understand but merely hates without hope. The individual who joins a revolutionary movement has glimpsed the possibility of a better world (or thinks he has, at any rate). For despair he substitutes hope. In the sense that it does not change the pattern of

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society, individual crime is never successful. The man who joins the Vietminh, the 26th of July movement, the F. L. N., or even the Communist Party believes that, through the existence of these revolutionary movements, he can alter the social pattern, and alter it to his advantage.

The twentieth century has witnessed a vast social revolution throughout the underdeveloped (psychologists read "underprivileged") areas of the world. In Algiers and Oran, in Johannesburg, in Leopoldville, in Havana, (one might even say in our own South), a vast mass of the population had been systematically excluded from sharing in the benefits of Western civilization. Little wonder that it rejected social cooperation. This problem is essentially similar to that of criminal and delinquent behavior. Modern society demands of its members great sacrifices, great repressions, great efforts of cooperation. Individuals are willing to pay this price in return for the advantages of social cohesion. But it is quite obvious that one cannot expect individuals to contribute their share to this program if they receive none of the benefits that normally accrue to social cohesion.

This social revolution has had grave repercussions for us. We are faced with a hostile regime in the U.S.S.R., in China, in Indo-China, and with a kind of hostile neutrality in many areas of Asia and Africa. We face strained relations not only with Cuba, but with all of Latin America. The Moslem revolt against France in Algeria, which is one more aspect of this social transformation, affects our security in Western Europe by weakening one of our key allies. An essentially social upheaval in Laos has nearly drawn us into war. We cannot deal intelligently with these revolutions if we do not understand their nature or their motivation.

Let us recognize the fact that we have, in the main, turned resolutely against social revolution. We have termed it socialism and done our best to prevent its success. While our social psychologists have found "justifications" and explanations for antisocial behavior among our delinquents, our political scientists have failed to find a similar "justification" for social revolution among the underprivileged classes of underdeveloped nations. We have failed to accept in international relations what is a commonplace in crim-

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inology: the integral relation between social conditions and social behavior. To consider crime an isolated and incomprehensible phenomenon is just as futile as to consider all social revolutions products of the machinations of "evil" men, machinations that, emanating from Moscow, are the equivalent of cataclysms of nature, powerful, but mysterious and unpredictable. And the ancient practice of treating a criminal as one possessed by a demon that has to be exorcised is no more "primitive" than our contemporary practice of dealing with social revolution through periodic invectives from Washington against international communism.

What first made us turn against Castro's revolution in Cuba? We turned against Castro when his movement revealed itself as a socio-economic revolution aimed at altering the entire structure of Cuban society. This initial hostility was understandable on the part of the businessmen who had been exploiting the Cuban economy for half a century, and among the gangsters who had been making huge profits from organized vice in Havana. But on the part of some others, at least two fundamental misunderstandings were involved.

First, we, as a nation, have developed a concept of freedom, the focal point of which is revolution against *political* tyranny. We feel that revolution makes sense only when it strikes at a directly coercive force that obviously and concretely limits and cramps our possibilities for individual action. Our concept of revolution and freedom is *physical*. It is best expressed in the definition of Thomas Hobbes: "Freedom is the absence of external impediments to motion." This is a purely negative concept, which sees freedom as freedom *from* something, freedom from external restrictions. There is no room in such a concept for the more complex idea of revolution as a positive act, not freedom *from* external impediments, but freedom *to* bring about a positive change in conditions.[2]

This feeling is rooted in our historical situation, particularly in the part of our history that is closest to national mythology, the American Revolution. The spirit of '76 has little or nothing to do

[2] It is interesting to note that the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. includes a variety of rights, such as the right to work, the right to rest and leisure, the right to education, none of which is mentioned in our Constitution, and none of which is considered by Americans to be a political right. Although it is clear that the Soviet Constitution is inoperative, it expresses certain fundamental aspirations, the urgency of which is enhanced by the fact that they exist in the realm of wish, rather than reality.

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with the concept of social reform. Our forefathers, who have become the heroes of our mythology, were not social reformers; they did not fight to alter the structure of society, but to remove an alien force that was weighing heavily upon an already existing and perfectly satisfactory social structure.

In other words, the first misunderstanding lies in a limited concept of revolution. To us revolution is political rather than social or economic; it is always direct and aimed at a concrete tyrant, never an indirect revolt against "social conditions"; it is always negative, that is, concerned with *removing* an impediment to freedom, never positive, that is, concerned with *building* a different world order. We have little understanding of a revolution that takes its roots in the same motivations as delinquency.[3] All of which is merely another way of saying that the European socialist movement, which was an attempt to deepen and modify the naïve and superficial eighteenth-century concept of freedom and democracy, bypassed us. And our reluctance to allow ourselves to be exposed to this intellectual movement because of its "subversive" nature has not helped our understanding of social revolution.

The second misunderstanding is more profound, and more debilitating to our world posture, than the first. It is the belief that the refusal to cooperate in the social order is morally reprehensible and should be punished. Sociologists will surely recognize here a parallel to the attitude of penologists who believe in "cracking down" on delinquents; and they will recognize their own dilemma in attempting to modify this repressive attitude toward crime. The worst aspect of our misunderstanding of social revolution is that we react to it almost invariably with hostility. Our social psychologists have begun to convince us that such hostility is futile in our dealings with criminals and delinquents, but we have hardly begun to apply the lesson in international relations.

The point is that it is as futile to try to prevent socialism with repressive measures as it is to try to prevent crime and delinquency with indiscriminate "toughness." The argument of the proponent

[3] And for the same reasons, we have little understanding, as a nation, of the problem of crime and delinquency, which requires *positive* social action. We react immediately and feelingly to the injustice of the bully. We have no such strong feelings toward the "injustice" of slum conditions, or racial discrimination.

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of "rugged individualism" in the United States is that if the average Cuban, let us say, is not rich, it is because he is lazy, incompetent, unambitious. It is a familiar argument, one that has virtually passed into the national mythology. What this argument overlooks is that economic activity does not take place in a vacuum; it takes place in a social framework. And if a large segment of society refuses to cooperate in this framework, if, for one reason or another, the game of social cooperation is not worth the candle of social rewards, if the game is rigged so that the underprivileged are inevitably the losers, it is neither feasible nor morally justifiable to compel them to cooperate. This is even more true if the argument of rugged individualism is presented sincerely. If the proponent of free enterprise really means that each man should take care of himself, watch out for his own interest, his logic can be turned against him. It is difficult, for instance, to escape the conclusion that the competitive philosophy of the Western business community has been the most important factor in creating the very thing this community today shrinks from in horror: the trade union movement.

Not only is there no moral justification for forcing people to support a social structuring they do not want, but it is virtually impossible to compel them to do so. The only reasons that members of a society will tolerate a social order of which they disapprove are fear and ignorance. Fear, however, is a limited weapon. As psychology tells us, fear is a very unsatisfactory if not a positively harmful tool in dealing with crime and delinquency. The most it can achieve is a kind of passive acquiescence, which will smolder in resentment and erupt in overt criminality the moment restraints are removed. Social cooperation cannot be forced, it must be induced. The evidence of Algeria, of Indo-China, of Egypt, of Cuba has shown conclusively that the threat of force is as ineffective in the social class struggle as it is in dealing with individual criminals.[4]

Ignorance is the other reason that an oppressive social order is

[4] Unless, of course, we are willing to go to the extremes that were used during the Nazi regime in Germany, during the Stalinist terror in the Soviet Union and, presumably, under the Communist regime in China. But not only are we incapacitated in the extreme use of terror by our Western tradition, there is strong evidence of the ambivalent results of such tactics, even when carried out ruthlessly. See, for instance, Barrington Moore, *Terror and Progress, U.S.S.R.* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1954).

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tolerated. Either the individual will not understand the causes of the injuriousness of the social order or he will be convinced, through his ignorance of alternative possibilities, that no other social structuring is possible. This state of ignorance, particularly in the former colonial areas, came to an end with World War II, and it has been replaced by a new awareness that has led, in the underdeveloped world of Africa and Asia, to a bitter anticolonialism. We were unprepared to deal with this new phenomenon because we interpreted it narrowly, as a revolution against political tyranny. We extrapolated from our own experience and assumed that the peoples of Africa and Asia merely wished to be allowed to declare their independence, that their motivations were similar to ours in 1776. Too many of us remained blind to the *positive* aspirations of these people for a higher standard of living, a more comfortable life and a more equitable social structuring.

The lesson that has been so hard to learn is that the mass of peoples throughout the world no longer wish to cooperate in the kind of social order we have found most satisfactory. Unwillingness to recognize this desire for social reform has been particularly harmful to us in our attitude toward socialism, an attitude that has been resolutely hostile and denies any difference between the Russian Communist state and socialism in Ghana, for instance, or even in France. And by our very attitude, we have played into the hands of the U.S.S.R. For the Soviet Communist leaders have worked very assiduously to maintain the illusion that they are the true heirs of Marxist socialism, that the spirit of the Bolsheviks of 1917 still burns brightly in the Kremlin, in spite of the fact that the vast majority of these Bolsheviks have since been executed. This whitewashing job has had its difficulties: the purges of the 1930's (which cost them the support of numerous French Marxists, including the very influential André Gide), the Berlin riots of 1953, the bloody repression in Hungary in 1956 (which cost them another batch of western intellectuals, including another influential French thinker, Jean-Paul Sartre), and the whole apparatus of coercion that is still maintained in many of the satellite countries. Yet they have had much more success than they deserve in maintaining this illusion, largely because they can point so frequently to

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our behavior as a classic example of capitalist hostility. When we assert that there can be no doubt whatsoever that Nkrumah of Ghana is definitely in the Communist orbit, when we use our influence to depose a Lumumba because of "left-wing" tendencies, when we support such corrupt political regimes as those of Chiang Kai-shek, Franco, Rhee, Stroessner and Batista in the face of complete disavowal of them by their own people, we lend some measure of credence, in the minds of others, to the Soviet claims that we are the archenemies of social progress.

The U.S.S.R., of course, has a peculiar advantage among the new nations of the world because they have never identified it with the forces of colonialism. We compound this advantage when we express our suspicion and hostility toward any native government that is influenced by socialistic ideas. In the eyes of Africans and Asians, our insistence on an economy free of socialistic taint is merely a covert support for the maintenance of Western European economic exploitation after political independence is achieved.

The most ironic thing about our opposition to socialism is that it is essentially a pose. For we are not as hostile to socialism as we say we are. Or, more accurately, we are not as hostile to the reality of socialism in our own country as we are to the word itself. Our own social structure has been greatly altered since the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt. And although conservative Republicans thunder about "creeping socialism," the social welfare program of the New Deal has never been repealed. Yet on the international scene we project an image of ourselves as extremely conservative and sometimes reactionary. And the main reason we do this is because we ourselves have refused to accept, psychologically, the fact of social change. Although our workers would not dream of dissolving their labor unions to take their chances on an open labor market, and although our "senior" citizens would not consider cancelling their social security benefits because they represent an infringement on individual initative, we fondly cling to the illusion that we are still living on the frontier. The image we project in our international relations is meant primarily for our own comfort and reassurance.

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The net result of this attitude has been a propaganda victory for the U.S.S.R., which continues to pose, quite falsely, as the true heir of the socialist, Marxist tradition, while we are reviled and despised in many places abroad as the enemies of humanitarian ideals. Henry A. Kissinger says in *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* that our diplomacy "requires a consistent and bold program to identify ourselves with the aspirations of humanity." But for many years now we have failed to identify ourselves with these aspirations because they are aimed at social revolution and we have rejected the necessity of social revolution.

There is a fascinating parallel between our attitude toward crime and toward social reform. As Milton L. Barron says in *The Juvenile in Delinquent Society,* "proposals that 'social engineering' be employed to solve our social problems are associated with political subversion or foreign ideologies, and dismissed." Far too often we are hostile to the idea of a positive program of action, whether to curb crime and delinquency, or to curb communism. Paul W. Tappan says in *Juvenile Delinquency:* "So long as the Western European economic order remains fundamentally unaltered, there is little likelihood of controlling in any large measure the complex factors generating crimes and criminals." We might add that there is as little likelihood of "controlling in any large measure the complex factors generating" socialism and communism without basic social alterations, particularly in the underdeveloped world.

In the case of the individual criminal there is some plausibility in the resistance to "progressive" reforms. The individual is being weighed against society, and society has some justification if it decides that the attempt to prevent delinquency is too costly. As Mr. Tappan notes:

> A major problem in treatment philosophy arises from the conflict between social and individual motives. When society's protection demands that the individual be incarcerated but the individual's rehabilitation can best be achieved by treating him at large in the community, what treatment should be applied?

We can ignore the problem of the causes of crime, and incarcerating the criminal is within our power. But we cannot with much show of rationality maintain a hostile attitude toward a whole

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economic class. The willingness of Great Britain to accept social reform has resulted in a free and stable society that is a bastion of anticommunism. Refusal to accept social reform in France has resulted in a society that is torn by factional struggles and that is a weak link in our Western European alliance.[5] The bitter pill that our own conservative elements must swallow is that the social revolution of the twentieth century is inevitable, and that the best way to deal with it, and to avoid communism, is not to combat it but, on the contrary, to provide it with leadership.

For the question of leadership is crucial and points up a further problem. It was Karl Marx, a newspaperman, an intellectual, who authored the philosophy of socialism, not the English factory workers who were themselves the victims of the industrial revolution Marx was attacking. The underprivileged peons of Cuba, the coolies of Southeast Asia, did not create the revolutionary movements they now follow. In other words, the followers of such a revolutionary movement as the 26th of July movement in Cuba, although their political consciousness has developed beyond blind hostility and its consequent criminal acts, are not at the level of political sophistication of, let us say, the French bourgeoisie of 1789. The social, economic and *historical* situation of such people, and this remark applies to all the underprivileged groups engaged in social revolution in the twentieth century, is such that they will have a strong tendency to turn to a charismatic leader, like Castro, who embodies in his person all of their so long frustrated hopes and ambitions, and who spares them, by the establishment of what the Nazis used to call the *Fuhrer-prinzip,* the confusing complications of actually carrying out the transformation of society toward which they are uncertainly fumbling.

Such a charismatic leader introduces the possibility of perverting the social revolution. The motivations of the Castros, the Sukarnos, the Nkrumahs of the world *must* involve to a certain extent a will to power that is foreign to the motivations of their followers.

[5] See, in particular, David Schoenbrun, *As France Goes* (New York: Harper, 1957), for a brilliant analysis of the social strife that underlies the chronic political instability of France.

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If we are truly the leaders of the free world, we can insure that the underprivileged peoples do not become tools in the hands of political manipulators seeking merely selfish ends. But we can succeed in this task only by providing these people with the guidance, the material aid, given freely and with no strings attached, that they need to make their social revolution work. If we were to present ourselves as the true heirs of the humanitarian ideals envisioned by socialism we would have little difficulty in snatching the banner of social progress and anticolonialism from the U.S.S.R. If we identified ourselves with the aspirations of humanity by actually encouraging programs of social reform, we would find our world position immeasurably strengthened.

Psychologists have been most anxious to demonstrate the futility of "get tough" policies in dealing with antisocial behavior. Since antisocial behavior stems from a belief that society has nothing to offer the criminal in return for his cooperation, hostility merely confirms his point of view. A criminal can be prevented forcibly from committing injury to society by being placed in jail. He cannot, however, be made into a willing and productive member of society by force. This is the lesson of social psychology. It is a lesson but slowly being learned in the field of criminology. We have not yet fully realized its applicability in the field of international relations. The peoples of the world cannot be threatened into supporting us. The people of Cuba cannot be made pro-American by naval demonstrations in the Caribbean. Nor can we buy the support of the Spanish people, of the Chinese people, of Latin Americans, by lavishly pouring money into political regimes that these people reject.

We must be sufficiently mature, sufficiently compassionate, we must have sufficient foresight and vision patiently to guide the peoples of the world along the road they have chosen to follow, not smothering them with our support, nor rejecting them spitefully because they have chosen ways different from ours. Either policy would be as reckless to employ here as in the education of a child. We must learn the art of guidance, not depend upon coercion or bribery. Only in this way can we "win" the social revolution of the twentieth century.

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On Preparing to Read Kipling

RANDALL JARRELL

MARK TWAIN SAID that it isn't what they don't know that hurts people, it's what they do know that isn't so. This is true of Kipling. If people don't know about Kipling they can read Kipling, and then they'll know about Kipling: it's ideal. But most people already do know about Kipling—not very much, but too much: they know what isn't so, or what might just as well not be so, it matters so little. They know that, just as Calvin Coolidge's preacher was against sin and the Snake was for it, Kipling was for imperialism; he talked about the white man's burden; he was a crude popular—immensely popular—writer who got popular by writing "If," and "On the Road to Mandalay," and "The Jungle Book," and stories about India like Somerset Maugham, and children's stories; he wrote, "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet"; he wrote, "The female of the species is more deadly than the male"—or was that Pope? *Somebody* wrote it. In short: Kipling was someone people used to think was wonderful, but we know better than that now.

People certainly didn't know better than that then. "Dear Harry," William James begins. (It is hard to remember, hard to believe, that anyone ever called Henry James *Harry,* but if it had to be done, William James was the right man to do it.) "Last Sunday I dined with Howells at the Childs', and was delighted to hear him say that you were both a friend and an admirer of Rudyard Kipling. I am ashamed to say that I have been ashamed to write of that infant phenomenon, not knowing, with your exquisitely re-

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fined taste, how you might be affected by him and fearing to *jar.* [It is wonderful *to have the engineer/ Hoist with his own petard.*] The more rejoiced am I at this, but why didn't you say so ere now? He's more of a Shakespeare than anyone yet in this generation of ours, as it strikes me. And seeing the new effects he lately brings in in 'The Light That Failed,' and that Simla Ball story with Mrs. Hauksbee in the *Illustrated London News,* makes one sure now that he is only at the beginning of a rapidly enlarging career, with indefinite growth before him. Much of his present coarseness and jerkiness is youth only, divine youth. But *what* a youth! Distinctly the biggest literary phenomenon of our time. He has such human entrails, and he takes less time to get under the heartstrings of his personages than anyone I know. On the whole, bless him.

"All intellectual work is the same,—the artist feeds the public on his own bleeding insides. Kant's *Kritik* is just like a Strauss waltz, and I felt the other day, finishing 'The Light That Failed,' and an ethical address to be given at Yale College simultaneously, that there was no *essential* difference between Rudyard Kipling and myself as far as that sacrificial element goes."

It surprises us to have James take Kipling so seriously, without reservations, with Shakespeare—to treat him as if he were Kant's *Kritik* and not a Strauss waltz. (Even Henry James, who could refer to "the good little Thomas Hardy"—who was capable of applying to the Trinity itself the adjective *poor*—somehow felt that he needed for Kipling that coarse word *genius,* and called him, at worst, "the great little Kipling.") Similarly, when Goethe and Matthew Arnold write about Byron, we are surprised to see them bringing in Shakespeare—are surprised to see how unquestioningly, with what serious respect, they speak of Byron, as if he were an ocean or a new ice age: "our soul," wrote Arnold, "had *felt* him like the thunder's roll." It is as though mere common sense, common humanity, required this of them: the existence of a world-figure like Byron demands (as the existence of a good or great writer does not) that any inhabitant of the world treat him somehow as the world treats him. Goethe knew that Byron "is a child when he reflects," but this did not prevent him from treating Byron exactly as he treated that other world-figure Napoleon.

An intelligent man said that the world felt Napoleon as a

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weight, and that when he died it would give a great *oof* of relief. This is just as true of Byron, or of such Byrons of their days as Kipling and Hemingway: after a generation or two the world is tired of being their pedestal, shakes them off with an *oof,* and then—hoisting onto its back a new world-figure—feels the penetrating satisfaction of having made a mistake all its own. Then for a generation or two the Byron lies in the dust where we left him: if the old world did him more than justice, a new one does him less. "If he was so good as all that why isn't he still famous?" the new world asks—if it asks anything. And then when another generation or two are done, we decide that he wasn't altogether a mistake people made in those days, but a real writer after all—that if we like *Childe Harold* a good deal less than anyone thought of liking it then, we like *Don Juan* a good deal more. Byron *was* a writer, people just didn't realize the sort of writer he was. We can feel impatient with Byron's world for liking him for the wrong reasons, and with the succeeding world for disliking him for the wrong reasons, and we are glad that our world, the real world, has at last settled Byron's account.

Kipling's account is still unsettled. Underneath, we still hold it against him that the world quoted him in its sleep, put him in its headlines when he was ill, acted as if he were God; we are glad that we have had Hemingway instead, to put in *our* headlines. Kipling is in the dust, and the dust seems to us a very good place for him. But in twenty or thirty years, when we have a new Byron-Kipling-Hemingway to put in our news programs when his rocket crashes, our resistance to Hemingway will have taken the place of our resistance to Kipling, and we shall find ourselves willing to entertain the possibility that Kipling *was* a writer after all—people just didn't realize the sort of writer he was.

There is a way of traveling into this future—of realizing, now, the sort of writer Kipling was—that is unusually simple, but that people are unusually unwilling to take. The way is: to read Kipling as if one were not prepared to read Kipling; as if one didn't already know about Kipling—had never been told how readers do feel about Kipling, should feel about Kipling; as if one were setting out, naked, to see something that is there naked. I don't entirely blame the reader if he answers: "Thanks very much; if it's just the

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same to you, I'll keep my clothes on." It's only human of him—man is the animal that wears clothes. Yet aren't works of art in some sense a way of doing without clothes, a means by which reader, writer and subject are able for once to accept their own nakedness, the nakedness not merely of the "naked truth," but also of the naked wishes that come before and after that truth? To read Kipling, for once, not as the crudely effective, popular writer we know him to be, but as, perhaps, the something else that even crudely effective, popular writers can become, would be to exhibit a magnanimity that might do justice both to Kipling's potentialities and to our own. Kipling did have, at first, the "coarseness and jerkiness" and mannered vanity of youth, human youth; Kipling did begin as a reporter, did print in newspapers the *Plain Tales from the Hills* which ordinary readers—and, unfortunately, most extraordinary ones—do think typical of his work; but then for half a century he kept writing. Chekhov began by writing jokes for magazines, skits for vaudeville; Shakespeare began by writing *Titus Andronicus* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* some of the crudest plays any crudely effective, popular writer has ever turned out. Kipling is neither a Chekhov nor a Shakespeare, but he is far closer to both than to the clothing-store-dummy-with-the-solar-topee we have agreed to call Kipling. Kipling, like it or not, admit it or not, was a great genius; and a great neurotic; and a great professional, one of the most skilful writers who have ever existed—one of the writers who have used English best, one of the writers who most often have made other writers exclaim, in the queer tone they use for the exclamation: "Well, I've got to admit it really is *written.*" When he died and was buried in that foreign land England, that only the Anglo-Indians know, I wish that they had put above his grave, there in *their* Westminster Abbey: "It really was *written.*"

Mies van der Rohe said, very beautifully: "I don't want to be interesting, I want to be good." Kipling, a great realist but a greater inventor, could have said that he didn't want to be realistic, he wanted to get it right: that he wanted it not the way it did or—statistics show—does happen, but the way it really would happen. You often feel about something in Shakespeare or Dostoevski that nobody ever said such a thing, but that it's just the sort of thing people would say if they could—is more real, in some sense, than

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what people do say. If you have given your imagination free rein, let things go as far as they want to go, the world they made for themselves while you watched can have, for you and later watchers, a spontaneous finality. Some of Kipling has this spontaneous finality; and because he has written so many different kinds of stories—no writer of fiction of comparable genius has depended so much, for so long, on short stories alone—you end dazzled by his variety of realization: so many plants, and so many of them dewy!

If I had to pick one writer to invent a conversation between an animal, a god and a machine, it would be Kipling. To discover what, if they ever said, the dumb would say—this takes real imagination; and this imagination of what isn't is the extension of a real knowledge of what is, the knowledge of a consummate observer who took no notes, except of names and dates: "if a thing didn't stay in my memory I argued it was hardly worth writing out." Knowing what the peoples, animals, plants, weathers of the world look like, sound like, smell like, was Kipling's métier, and so was knowing the words that could make someone else know. You can argue about the judgment he makes of something, but the thing is there. When as a child you first begin to read, what attracts you to a book is illustrations and conversations, and what scares you away is "long descriptions." In Kipling illustration and conversation and description (not long description; read, even the longest of his descriptions is short) have merged into a "toothsome amalgam" which the child reads with a grownup's ease, and the grownup with a child's wonder. Often Kipling writes with such grace and command, such a combination of experienced mastery and congenital inspiration, that we repeat with Goethe: "Seeing someone accomplishing arduous things with ease gives us an impression of witnessing the impossible." Sometimes the arduous thing Kipling is accomplishing seems to us a queer, even an absurd thing for anyone to wish to accomplish. But don't we have to learn to consent to this, with Kipling as with other good writers?—to consent to the fact that good writers just don't have good sense; that they are going to write it their way, not ours; that they are never going to have the objective, impersonal rightness they should have, but only the subjective, personal wrongness from which we derived the idea of the rightness. The first thing we notice about *War and Peace* and *Madame*

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Bovary and *Remembrance of Things Past* is how wonderful they are; the second thing we notice is how much they have wrong with them. They are not at all the perfect work of art we want—so perhaps Ruskin was right when he said that the person who wants perfection knows nothing about art.

Kipling says about a lion cub he and his family had on the Cape: "He dozed on the stoep, I noticed, due north and south, looking with slow eyes up the length of Africa"; this, like several thousand such sentences, makes you take for granted the truth of his "I made my own experiments in the weights, colors, perfumes, and attributes of words in relation to other words, either as read aloud so that they may hold the ear, or, scattered over the page, draw the eye." His words range from gaudy effectiveness to perfection; he is a professional magician but, also, a magician. He says about stories: "A tale from which pieces have been raked out is like a fire that has been poked. One does not know that the operation has been performed, but everyone feels the effect." (He even tells you how best to rake out the pieces: with a brush and Chinese ink you grind yourself.) He is a kind of Liszt—so isn't it just empty bravura, then? Is Liszt's? Sometimes; but sometimes bravura is surprisingly full, sometimes virtuosos are surprisingly plain: to boil a potato perfectly takes a chef home from the restaurant for the day.

Kipling was just such a potato-boiler: a professional knower of professionals, a great trapeze-artist, cabinetmaker, prestidigitator, with all the unnumbered details of others' guilds, crafts, mysteries, techniques at the tip of his fingers—or, at least, at the tip of his tongue. The first sentences he could remember saying as a child had been haltingly translated into English "from the vernacular" (that magical essential phrase for the reader of Kipling!) and just as children feel that it is they and not the grownups who see the truth, so Kipling felt about many things that it is the speakers of the vernacular and not the sahibs who tell the truth; that there are many truths that, to be told at all, take the vernacular. From childhood on he learned—to excess or obsession, even—the vernaculars of earth, the worlds inside the world, the many species into which place and language and work divide man. From the species that the division of labor produces it is only a step to the animal species

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that evolutionary specialization produces, so that Kipling finds it easy to write stories about animals; from the vernaculars or dialects or cants that place or profession produces (Kipling's slogan is, almost, "The cant *is* the man") it is only a step to those that time itself produces, so that Kipling finds it easy to write stories about all the different provinces of the past, or the future (in "As Easy as A.B.C."), or Eternity (if his queer institutional stories of the bureaucracies of Heaven and Hell are located there). Kipling was no Citizen of the World, but like the Wandering Jew he had lived in many places and known many peoples, an uncomfortable stranger repeating to himself the comforts of earth, all its immemorial contradictory ways of being at home.

Goethe, very winningly, wanted to have put on his grave a sentence saying that he had never been a member of any guild, and was an amateur until the day he died. Kipling could have said, "I never saw the guild I wasn't a member of," and was a professional from the day he first said to his *ayah,* in the vernacular—not being a professional myself, I don't know what it was he said, but it was the sort of thing a man would say who, from the day he was sixteen till the day he was twenty-three, was always—"luxury of which I dream still!"—shaved by his servant before he woke up in the morning.

This fact of his life, I've noticed, always makes hearers give a little shiver; but it is all the mornings when no one shaved Kipling before Kipling woke up, because Kipling had never been to sleep, that make me shiver. "Such night-wakings" were "laid upon me through my life," Kipling writes, and tells you in magical advertising prose how lucky the wind before dawn always was for him. You and I should have such luck! Kipling was a professional, but a professional possessed by both the Daemon he tells you about, who writes some of the stories for him, and the demons he doesn't tell you about, who write some others. Nowadays we've learned to call part of the unconscious *it* or *id;* Kipling had not, but he called this Personal Demon of his *it.* (When he told his father that *Kim* was finished his father asked: "Did *it* stop, or you?" Kipling "told him that it was It.") "When your Daemon is in charge," Kipling writes, "do not try to think consciously. Drift, wait, and obey." He was sure of the books in which "my Daemon was with me. . . . When

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those books were finished they said so themselves with, almost, the waterhammer click of a tap turned off." (Yeats said that a poem finishes itself with a click like a closing box.) Kipling speaks of the "doom of the makers": when their Daemon is missing they are no better than anybody else; but when he is there, and they put down what he dictates, "the word he gives shall continue, whether in earnest or jest." Kipling even "learned to distinguish between the peremptory motions of my Daemon, and the 'carry-over' of induced electricity, which comes of what you might call mere 'frictional' writing." We always tend to distrust geniuses about genius, as if what they say didn't arouse much empathy in us, or as if we were waiting till some more reliable source of information came along; still, isn't what Kipling writes a colored version of part of the plain truth?—there is plenty of supporting evidence. But it is interesting to me to see how thoroughly Kipling manages to avoid any subjective guilt, fallible human responsibility, so that he can say about anything in his stories either: "Entirely conscious and correct, objectively established, independently corroborated, the experts have testified, the professionals agree, it is the consensus of the authorities at the Club," or else: "I had nothing to do with it. I know nothing about it. *It* did it. The Daemon did it all." The reader of Kipling—this reader at least—hates to give all the credit to the Professional or to the Daemon; perhaps the demons had something to do with it too. Let us talk about the demons.

One writer says that we only notice what hurts us—that if you went through the world without hurting anyone, nobody would even know you had been alive. This is quite false, but true, too: if you put it in terms of the derivation of the Principle of Reality from the primary Principle of Pleasure, it does not even sound shocking. But perhaps we only notice a sentence if it sounds shocking—so let me say grotesquely: Kipling was someone who had spent six years in a concentration camp as a child; he never got over it. As a very young man he spent seven years in an India that confirmed his belief in concentration camps; he never got over this either.

As everybody remembers, one of Goya's worst engravings has underneath it: *I saw it.* Some of Kipling has underneath: *It is there.* Since the world is a necessary agreement that it isn't there, the

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world answered: *It isn't,* and told Kipling what a wonderful imagination he had. Part of the time Kipling answered stubbornly: *I've been there* (*I am there* would have been even truer) and part of the time he showed the world what a wonderful imagination he had. Say *Fairy tales!* enough to a writer and he will write you fairy tales. But to our *Are you telling me the truth or are you reassuring yourself?*—we ask it often of any writer, but particularly often of Kipling—he sometimes can say truthfully: *Reassuring you;* we and Kipling have interests in common. Kipling knew that "every nation, like every individual, walks in a vain show—else it could not live with itself"; Kipling knew people's capacity not to see: "through all this shifting, shouting brotheldom the pious British householder and his family bored their way back from the theaters, eyes-front and fixed, as though not seeing." But he himself had seen, and so believed in, the City of Dreadful Night, and the imperturbable or delirious or dying men who ran the city; this City outside was the duplicate of the City inside; and when the people of Victorian Europe didn't believe in any of it, except as you believe in a ghost story, he knew that this was only because they didn't *know*—he knew. So he was obsessed by—wrote about, dreamed about and stayed awake so as not to dream about—many concentration camps, of the soul as well as of the body; many tortures, hauntings, hallucinations, deliria, diseases, nightmares, practical jokes, revenges, monsters, insanities, neuroses, abysses, forlorn hopes, last chances, extremities of every kind; these and their sweet opposites. He feels the convalescent's gratitude for mere existence, that the world is what the world was: how blue the day is, to the eye that has been blinded! Kipling praises the cessation of pain and its more blessed accession, when the body's anguish blots out for a little "Life's grinning face . . . the trusty Worm that dieth not, the steadfast Fire also." He praises man's old uses, home and all the ways of home; its Father and Mother, there to run to if you could only wake; and praises all our dreams of waking, our fantasies of return or revenge or insensate endurance. He praises the words he has memorized, that man has made from the silence; the senses that cancel each other out, that man has made from the senselessness; the worlds man has made from the world; but he praises and reproduces the

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sheer charm of—few writers are so purely charming!—the world that does not need to have anything done to it, that is simply there around us as we are there in it. He knows the joy of finding exactly the right words for what there are no words for; the satisfactions of sentimentality and brutality and love too, the "exquisite tenderness" that began in cruelty. But in the end he thanks God most for the small drugs that last—is grateful that He has not laid on us "the yoke of too long Fear and Wonder," but has given us Habit and Work: so that his Seraphs waiting at the Gate praise God

> Not for any miracle of easy Loaves and Fishes
> But for doing, 'gainst our will, work against our wishes,
> Such as finding food to fill daily emptied dishes . . .

praise him

> Not for Prophecies or Powers, Visions, Gifts, or Graces
> But the unregardful hours that grind us in our places
> With the burden on our backs, the weather in our faces.

"Give me the first six years of a child's life and you can have the rest" are the first words of *Something of Myself,* Kipling's reticent and revealing autobiography. The sentence exactly fits and exactly doesn't fit. For the first six years of his life the child lived in Paradise, the inordinately loved and reasonably spoiled son of the best of parents; after that he lived in the Hell in which the best of parents put him, and paid to have him kept: in "a dark land, and a darker room full of cold, in one wall of which a woman made naked fire . . . a woman who took in children whose parents were in India." The child did not see his parents again for the next six years. He accepted the Hell as "eternally established. . . . I had never heard of Hell, so I was introduced to it in all its terrors. . . . I was regularly beaten. . . . I have known a certain amount of bullying, but this was calculated torture—religious as well as scientific. . . . Deprivation from reading was added to my punishments. . . . I was well beaten and sent to school through the streets of Southsea with the placard "Liar" between my shoulders. . . . Some sort of nervous breakdown followed, for I imagined I saw shadows and things that were not there, and they worried me more than the Woman. . . . A man came down to see me as to my eyes and reported that I was

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half-blind. This, too, was supposed to be 'showing-off,' and I was segregated from my sister—another punishment—as a sort of moral leper."

At the end of the six years the best of parents came back for their leper ("she told me afterwards that when she first came up to my room to kiss me goodnight, I flung up an arm to guard off the cuff I had been trained to expect"), and for the rest of their lives they continued to be the best and most loving of parents, blamed by Kipling for nothing, adored by Kipling for everything: "I think I can truthfully say that those two made up for me the only public for whom then I had any regard whatever till their deaths, in my forty-fifth year."

My *best of parents* cannot help sounding ironic, yet I do not mean it as irony. From the father's bas-reliefs for *Kim* to the mother's "There's no Mother in Poetry, my dear," when the son got angry at her criticism of his poems—from beginning to end they are bewitching; you cannot read about them without wanting to live with them; they were the best of parents. It is *this* that made Kipling what he was: if they had been the worst of parents, even fairly bad parents, even ordinary parents, it would all have made sense, Kipling himself could have made sense out of it. As it was, his world had been torn in two and he himself torn in two: for under the part of him that extenuated everything, blamed for nothing, there was certainly a part that extenuated nothing, blamed for everything—a part whose existence he never admitted, most especially not to himself. He says about some of the things that happened to him during those six years: "In the long run these things and many more of the like drained me of any capacity for real, personal hatred for the rest of my life." To admit from the unconscious something inadmissible, one can simply deny it, bring it up into the light with a *No;* Kipling has done so here—the capacity for real, personal hatred, real, personal revenge, summary fictional justice, is plain throughout Kipling's work. Listen to him tell how he first began to write. He has just been told about Dante: "I bought a fat, American-cloth-bound notebook and set to work on an *Inferno,* into which I put, under appropriate tortures, all my friends and most of the masters." (Why only *most?* Two were spared, one for the Father and one for the Mother.) Succinct and

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reticent as *Something of Myself* is, it has room for half a dozen scenes in which the helpless Kipling is remorselessly, systematically, comprehensively humiliated before the inhabitants of his universe. At school, for instance: "H_____ then told me off before my delighted companions in his best style, which was acid and contumelious. He wound up with a few general remarks about dying as a 'scurrilous journalist'. . . . The tone, matter, and setting of his discourse were as brutal as they were meant to be—brutal as the necessary wrench on the curb that fetches up a too-flippant colt." Oh, necessary, entirely necessary, we do but torture in education! one murmurs to these methodical justifications of brutality as methodical, one of authority's necessary stages. Here is another master: "Under him I came to feel that words could be used as weapons, for he did me the honor to talk at me plentifully. . . . One learns more from a good scholar in a rage than from a score of lucid and laborious drudges; and to be made the butt of one's companions in full form is no bad preparation for later experiences. I think this 'approach' is now discouraged for fear of hurting the soul of youth, but in essence it is no more than rattling tins or firing squibs under a colt's nose. I remember nothing save satisfaction or envy when C_____ broke his precious ointments over my head." Nothing? Better for Kipling if he had remembered—not remembering gets rid of nothing. Yet who knows? he may even have felt—known that he felt—"nothing save satisfaction and envy," the envying satisfaction of identification. As he says, he was learning from a master to use words as weapons, but he had already learned from his life a more difficult lesson: to know that, no matter how the sick heart and raw being rebel, it is all for the best; in the past there were the best of masters and in the future there will be the best of masters, if only we can wait out, bear out, the brutal present—the incomprehensible present that some day we shall comprehend as a lesson.

The scene changes from England to India, school to Club, but the action—passion, rather—is the same: "As I entered the long, shabby dining-room where we all sat at one table, everybody hissed. I was innocent enough to ask: 'What's the joke? Who are they hissing?' 'You,' said the man at my side. 'Your damn rag has ratted over the Bill.' It is not pleasant to sit still when one is twenty while all

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your universe hisses you." One expects next a sentence about how customary and salutary hissing is for colts, but for once it doesn't come; and when Kipling's syntax suffers as it does in this sentence, he is remembering something that truly is not pleasant. He even manages somewhat to justify, somehow to justify, his six years in Hell: the devils' inquisitions, after all, "made me give attention to the lies I soon found it necessary to tell; and this, I presume, is the foundation of literary effort. . . . Nor was my life an unsuitable preparation for my future, in that it demanded constant wariness, the habit of observation and attendance on moods and tempers; the noting of discrepancies between speech and action; a certain reserve of demeanor; and automatic suspicion of sudden favors." I have seen writers called God's spies, but Kipling makes it sound as if they were just spies—or spies on God. If only he could have blamed God—his Gods—a little consciously, forgiven them a little unconsciously! could have felt that someone, sometimes, doesn't *mean* something to happen! But inside, and inside stories, everything is meant.

After you have read Kipling's fifty or seventy-five best stories you realize that few men have written this many stories of this much merit, and that very few have written more and better stories. Chekhov and Turgenev are two who immediately come to mind; and when I think of their stories I cannot help thinking of what seems to me the greatest lack in Kipling's. I don't know exactly what to call it: a lack of dispassionate moral understanding, perhaps—of the ability both to understand things and to understand that there is nothing to do about them. (In a story, after all, there is always something you *can* do, something that a part of you is always trying to make you do.) Kipling is a passionate moralist, with a detailed and occasionally profound knowledge of part of things; but his moral spectrum has shifted, so that he can see far down into the infrared, but is blind for some frequencies normal eyes are sensitive to. His morality is the one-sided, desperately protective, sometimes vindictive morality of someone who has been for some time the occupant of one of God's concentration camps, and has had to spend the rest of his life justifying or explaining out of existence what he cannot forget. Kipling tries so hard to celebrate and justify true authority, the work and habit and wisdom of the world, because he

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feels so bitterly the abyss of pain and insanity that they overlie, and can do—even will do—nothing to prevent.

Kipling's morality is the morality of someone who has to prove that God is not responsible for part of the world, and that the Devil is. If Father and Mother were not to blame for anything, yet what did happen to you could happen to you—if God is good, and yet the concentration camps exist—then there has to be *someone* to blame, and to punish too, some real, personal source of the world's evil. (He finishes "At the End of the Passage" by having someone quote: "There may be Heaven, there must be Hell./ Meanwhile there is our life here. Well?" In most of his stories he sees to it that our life here is Heaven and Hell.) But in this world, often, there is nothing to praise but no one to blame, and Kipling can bear to admit this in only a few of his stories. He writes about one source of things in his childhood: "And somehow or other I came across a tale about a lion-hunter in South Africa who fell among lions who were all Freemasons, and with them entered into a conspiracy against some wicked baboons. I think that, too, lay dormant until the Jungle Books began to be born." In Chekhov or Turgenev, somehow or other, the lions aren't really Freemasons and the baboons aren't really wicked. In Chekhov and Turgenev, in fact, most of the story has disappeared from the story: there was a lion-hunter in South Africa, and first he shot the lions, and then he shot the baboons, and finally he shot himself; and yet it wasn't *wicked,* exactly, but human—very human.

Kipling had learned too well and too soon that, in William James' words: "The normal process of life contains moments as bad as any of those which insane melancholy is filled with, moments in which radical evil gets its innings and takes its solid turn. The lunatic's visions of horror are all drawn from the material of daily fact. Our civilization is founded on the shambles, and each individual existence goes out in a lonely spasm of helpless agony. If you protest, my friend, wait till you arrive there yourself!" Kipling had arrived there early and returned there often. One thinks sadly of how deeply congenial to this torturing obsessive knowledge of Kipling's the first World War was: the death and anguish of Europe produced some of his best and most terrible stories, and the death of his own son, his own anguish, produced "Mary Postgate," that

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nightmarish, most human and most real daydream of personal revenge. The world *was* Hell and India underneath, after all; and he could say to the Victorian, Edwardian Europeans who had thought it all just part of his style: "You wouldn't believe me!"

Svidrigaïlov says: "We are always thinking of eternity as an idea that cannot be understood, something immense. But why must it be? What if, instead of all this, you suddenly find just a little room there, something like a village bath-house, grimy, and spiders in every corner, and that's all eternity is. . . . I, you know, would certainly have made it so deliberately." Part of Kipling would have replied to this with something denunciatory and biblical, but another part would have blurted eagerly, like somebody out of *Kim:* "Oah yess, that is dam-well likely! Like a dak-bungalow, you know." It is an idea that would have occurred to him, down to the last *deliberately.*

But still another part of Kipling would suddenly have seen—he might even later have written it down, according to the dictates of his Daemon—a story about a boy who is abandoned in a little room, grimy, with spiders in every corner, and after a while the spiders come a little nearer, and a little nearer, and one of them is Father Spider, and one of them is Mother Spider, and the boy is their Baby Spider. To Kipling the world was a dark forest full of families: so that when your father and mother leave you in the forest to die, the wolves that come to eat you are always Father Wolf and Mother Wolf, your real father and real mother, and you are—as not even the little wolves ever quite are—their real son. The family romance, the two families of the Hero, have so predominant a place in no other writer. Kipling never said a word or thought a thought against his parents, "both so entirely comprehending that except in trivial matters we had hardly need of words"; few writers have made authority so tender, beautiful and final—have had us miserable mortals serve better masters; *but* Kipling's Daemon kept bringing Kipling stories in which wild animals turn out to be the abandoned Mowgli's real father and mother, a heathen Lama turns out to be the orphaned Kim's real father—and Kipling wrote down the stories and read them aloud to his father and mother.

This is all very absurd, all very pathetic? Oh yes, that's very likely; but, reader, down in the darkness where the wishes sleep,

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snuggled together like bats, you and I are Baby Spider too. If you think *this* absurd you should read Tolstoy—all of Tolstoy. But I should remark, now, on something that any reader of Kipling will notice: that although he can seem extraordinarily penetrating or intelligent—inspired, even—he can also seem very foolish or very blind. This is a characteristic of the immortals from which only we mortals are free. They oversay everything. It is only ordinary readers and writers who have ordinary common sense, who are able to feel about things what an ordinarily sensible man should. To another age, of course, our ordinary common sense will seem very very common and ordinary, but not sense, exactly: sense never lasts for long; instead of having created our own personal daydream or nightmare, as the immortals do, we merely have consented to the general daydream or nightmare that our age accepted as reality—it will seem to posterity only sense to say so, and it will say so, before settling back into a common sense of its own.

In the relations of mortals and immortals, yesterday's and today's posterities, there is a certain pathos or absurdity. There is a certain absurdity in my trying to persuade you to read Kipling sympathetically—who are *we* to read or not read Kipling sympathetically? part of me grunts. Writing about just which writers people are or are not attracted to, these years—who was high in the 19th, who's low in the 20th—all the other stock market quotations of the centuries, makes me feel how much such things have to do with history, and how little with literature. The stories themselves are literature. While their taste is on my tongue, I can't help feeling that virtue is its own reward, that good writing will take care of itself. It is a feeling I have often had after reading all of an author: that there it is. I can see that if I don't write this about the stories, plenty of other writers will; that if you don't read the stories, plenty of other readers will. The man Kipling, the myth Kipling is over; but the stories themselves—Kipling—have all the time in the world. The stories—some of them—can say to us with the calm of anything that has completely realized its own nature: "Worry about yourselves, not us. *We're* all right."

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After the Great Metaphors

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

IN SOME RESPECTS, the twentieth century is less attractive intellectually than the nineteenth. The entrenched enemy that Darwin, Marx, Frazer and Freud each battled in his own fashion, the bigoted ignorance and superstition that masks as religion, has survived their onslaughts and is apparently stronger than ever. It is not that there has been a religious revival so much as an obscurantism revival, a disinterest in knowledge as a good in itself, perhaps a new failure of nerve. Where the ideas of Darwin, Marx, Frazer and Freud have been embraced by the church, it tends to be the embrace of the folklore witch, an embrace that castrates.

Apart from the influence of religious obscurantism, our century generally seems less interested in ideas than the last, seems to care about them less and to take them less seriously. Some of this is an unfortunate effect of the discounting Marx and Freud have taught us; it is so easy now to dismiss any idea as an ideology or a rationalization. Some of it is due to the fact that our sciences have become incomprehensible to the layman. Darwin's successors now write in genetic tabulations, Freud's in experimental statistics. The great twentieth-century revolution in physics inaugurated by Albert Einstein and Max Planck cannot be understood except in the dimmest and most general fashion without extensive training in science and mathematics. No layman can read Einstein's publications and agree or disagree, as he can with *The Origin of Species* or *The Golden Bough*. The fact that the true intellectual revolutions of our century are going on behind the back, so to speak, of the humanistically-educated probably explains the popularity of such spurious historical lawmakers as Oswald Spengler and Arnold

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Toynbee, or such intellectual shoddy as Immanuel Velikovsky's catastrophism or J. B. Rhine's parapsychology. In some of our social sciences, particularly in anthropology, the accumulation of data has become so overwhelming that it can now be used to justify any generalization, and many anthropologists are so wary of any theory or law that they flee into atomism.

Darwin, Marx, Frazer and Freud seem characteristically nineteenth-century (although Frazer and Freud did most of their work in the twentieth century) because of their assumption of teleology. Even Freud, who lacked the faith in the ever-onward-and-upward progress of man that the other three shared, assumed without question an ontogenetic teleology, a progress of the lucky individual to the ideal of heterosexual genitality, productive sublimation and ego capacity. Some of the Freudian schismatics, in fact, sooner or later restored the phylogenetic teleology that Freud had bravely discarded. Adler writes in *Social Interest* in the 1930's: "The universal fact of the creative evolution of all living things can teach us that a goal is appointed for the line of development in every species—the goal of perfection, of active adaptation to the cosmic demands." It is precisely this secure faith in progress toward an appointed goal that our century has lost. As Malcolm Cowley demonstrates eloquently in his afterword to *Books That Changed Our Minds,* we no longer make John Stuart Mill's assumption "that the tendency of things, on the whole, is toward improvement," and we no longer make it in large part because of what these nineteenth-century thinkers, who did make it, have shown us. Helen Merrell Lynd writes typically for our time in *On Shame and the Search for Identity* in 1958 that "the analogies based on the idea that evolution means inevitable progress" are not "any longer possible for us." Where the nineteenth century characteristically saw evolution, we characteristically see only change.

In addition to their teleology, Darwin, Marx, Frazer and Freud had many other things in common. Two characteristics are of particular interest and importance. The first is intellectual tenacity, held in varying degrees in proportion to the power of the formula used for discounting criticism and opposition. None was entirely tenacious, but where they were not they were lucky. Darwin, with no good formula for discounting any argument not obviously igno-

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rant or bigoted, in the years after *The Origin of Species* fell away from his own ideas more and more into the Lamarckian inheritance of acquired characteristics. He was saved from undoing his own work by the fact that the world reacted to the first edition of the *Origin* and never noticed his later concessions, by the fact that his followers were purer in the faith than he, and by August Weismann's theory of the continuity of the germ plasm, which effectively saved Darwinism from merging with Lamarckism. Marx, with a fine formula for discounting every contradiction as the blindness of bourgeois ideology, fell away from his own faith only once, when he lost his faith in the revolution, around 1870. He was saved by the Paris Commune.

Frazer, stubborn rather than strong, deeply ambivalent, and with no machinery whatsoever for discounting criticism, changed his colors like a chameleon (as he acknowledged). He fully repudiated his great insight, and thus lost his chance to revolutionize thought on a scale comparable to the other three. Perhaps we can see Frazer best as an Engels who never found his Marx. Freud, with a formula for discounting, "resistance," as overpowering as Marx's, never fell away from his system in any major respect, once he got off the wrong road of confusing fantasy with experience. After revising his system so that it was stronger where it had been repaired, like a well-glued joint (it was this that Frazer could never do), Freud fell into only one un-Freudian heresy, Stekelian uniform dream symbolism, and this was a minor disease from which he recovered in his last years. All four men conceded to the world somewhat. Thus the 1859 edition of *The Origin of Species* is a better and stronger book than any later revision, the 1890 two-volume *Golden Bough* far outweighs the later enlarged editions, the 1899 *Interpretation of Dreams* is more persuasive than any later edition, and the first volume of *Capital* is enormously better than the later volumes.

The other important characteristic these writers share in varying degrees seems very close to the secret of their genius. It is a capacity for making their ideas a personal issue, for feeling themselves at stake, that resulted in peculiarly demanding personal relations and great vindictiveness toward deviationists. All, in short, needed what only Freud admitted to, the coexistence of a beloved

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friend who accepts and a hated enemy who rejects, preferably the same person at different stages in the relationship. For lack of information, we can only conjecture about personal factors behind Frazer's turnings. Freud's lengthy series of such cycles of love and betrayal is well known. Marx had the friend supremely and permanently in Engels, the enemy in Lassalle, Bakunin and a hundred lesser figures. Darwin had something like an Engels in the combination of Hooker, Huxley and Wallace. He had Engels' warmth of attachment in Hooker, his public battling in Huxley (who called himself "Darwin's bulldog") and his self-effacement and even intellectual subservience in Wallace. If the gentle and inhibited Darwin never had a proper enemy, he nevertheless managed to have something like the whole Freudian cycle in Lyell, his earliest supporter and intellectual patron, who infuriated him by never coming out publicly in support of the theory of evolution by natural selection.

The occasion of the death of a rejector is peculiarly revealing, as though its drama overcomes all repression. When Lassalle was killed in a duel, Marx, who had denounced him in the most vicious terms for a decade, was touched. He wrote to Engels:

> Lassalle's misfortune has been damnably in my head these days. He was, after all, one of the old stock, the enemy of our enemies. And then the thing came as such a surprise that it is hard to believe that so noisy, stirring, pushing a man is now as dead as a mouse, and must hold his tongue altogether.

But when Lyell died, that kindly man Charles Darwin was as cold as ice. He wrote to Hooker, expressing surprise at Hooker's grief: "I cannot say that I felt his death much, for I fully expected it, and have looked for some little time at his career as finished." And when Adler died, the unvindictive Freud was heartless. Like Darwin, he wrote to Arnold Zweig expressing surprise at Zweig's grief: "I don't understand your sympathy for Adler. For a Jewboy out of a Viennese suburb a death in Aberdeen is an unheard-of career in itself and a proof of how far he had got on."

The influence and effects of Darwin, Marx, Frazer and Freud on the world can only be sketched in most superficially. There is general agreement that Darwin revolutionized not only biology, but

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the whole world of thought. "Psychology, Ethics, Cosmology were stirred to their foundations," Huxley wrote in 1885.

In biology since Darwin a few trends can be noted. Two props of Darwin's theory, developed by German zoologists, are the continuity of the germ plasm, popularized by Weismann, and Ernst Haeckel's theory that in embryology, ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. Continuity has been challenged many times but never refuted, whereas Haeckel's recapitulation has been largely discarded, and in part replaced by its opposite, Walter Garstang's paedomorphosis (a resemblance of the adult descendant to the youthful ancestor, oddly anticipated by Darwin). The great modern readjustment of the theory of evolution by natural selection has been its integration with Mendelian genetics, after the simultaneous rediscovery of Mendel by three botanists in 1900. After brilliant experimental and mathematical work by W. Bateson, H. J. Muller, T. H. Morgan, J. B. S. Haldane and others, this took final shape in Sir Ronald Fisher's *The Genetical Theory of Natural Selection* in 1930. Insofar as this synthesis is a modification of Darwinism, or neo-Darwinism, it is principally a recognition that natural selection operates by altering the hereditary qualities of a population.

For the most part, Darwin's theories have been strengthened rather than weakened by later scientific discovery. His theory of the origin of coral reefs seems to have been confirmed by borings, his general evolutionary theory has been greatly strengthened by immense progress in paleontology (we now have whole fossil sequences), embryology and other sciences. An evolution so rapid as to be visible in a lifetime, the phenomenon of melanism in British moths, has been discovered. Even Darwin's wildest theory, Pangenesis, is now recognized as an anticipation of modern cytology and taken seriously by geneticists. Reaction to Darwinism has somewhat divided by field. Thus botanists have tended to emphasize mutation rather than gradual modification, since they see the successful survival of radical mutations, while zoologists have tended to reject mutation, since their radical mutations are freaks that rarely survive and reproduce successfully. For the same reason geologists, with their still longer time perspective, have tended to be more sympathetic to Darwin's theory of the origin of coral reefs than zoologists. The most characteristic change between nineteenth

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and twentieth-century Darwinism (at least this one seems to be to our credit) is that its imagery has become pacific. In his foreword to *Evolution by Natural Selection,* a centenary reissue of the Darwin-Wallace statement of 1858 and Darwin's earlier drafts, Sir Gavin de Beer writes:

> In general, however, the 'struggle for existence' is wrongly pictured as nothing but a tooth-and-claw skin-game, for selection is mostly a matter of genes, competition between enzymes, and ecological efficiency, at the level of ions and molecules.

If Darwin's essential vision was of struggle and competition, he also saw combination, collaboration and mutual aid in nature. In discussing the sociological or ethical applications of evolution by natural selection, there has been a tendency to see only the social Darwinism of Andrew Carnegie, that big-dog-eat-little-dog is natural and therefore right. Credit for this application is more properly Herbert Spencer's than Darwin's, although Darwin's son Leonard became a ferocious social Darwinian, according to Gwen Raverat's *Period Piece,* which quotes him as saying: "A man who can earn and keep money shows that he has the qualities essential to survival." Nor is it the only possible application, as Marx and Prince Kropotkin quickly realized. C. Bouglé writes in "Darwinism and Sociology," in *Darwin and Modern Science:* "Pessimistic and optimistic, aristocratic and democratic, individualistic and socialistic systems were to war with each other for years by casting scraps of Darwinism at each others' heads." Darwin's influence on literature has been similarly multiverse. If Darwinism first appeared in literature in the naturalism of Zola, the despair of Hardy and the bleak determinism of Frank Norris, Jack London and Theodore Dreiser, we can see a later humanistic and imaginative fiction that is equally Darwinian in such writers as William Golding in England and Bernard Malamud in the United States.

The consequences of Karl Marx have been overwhelming. The Bolshevik revolution in Russia, and its sequels in Eastern Europe and Asia, have all been made in Marx's name, although what he would have thought of them is uncertain. The history of Marxist socialism and communism is too vast a subject for discussion here, and its literature alone is a life study. In our terms, Leninism is the

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taking literally of metaphor, the concretization of imaginative vision into history, on the order of Christianity. There is no doubt that Marx wanted and demanded it, although that does not guarantee his delight in the result. Lenin's idea of revolution by a trained conspiratorial Communist party, inaugurating the dictatorship of the proletariat, is clearly implied in *The Communist Manifesto,* although Marx seems to have discarded it as impractical after 1848. Rather like mutation theory in biology, the Russian revolution was a triumph of saltation, violating Marx's rule of orderly progress through the necessary stages of historical development, advanced industrial capitalism being the last. In the final years of his life, in the preface to the Russian edition of the *Manifesto* in 1882, Marx formulated for some of his Russian followers the beginnings of a doctrine of Russian exceptionalism, based on the primitive Russian peasant commune, the *mir.*

With the Chinese revolution and agrarian communism, saltation has become even more pronounced, and Leninism and Maoism are thus truly neo-Marxisms, as much so as the mild deviationism of Polish and Hungarian communism, and the radical deviationism of Yugoslav communism. However much communism in practice differs from Marx's prescriptions, its ultimate appeal is always to his name (although Lenin often leaned toward Engels), and the sacred text is *Capital.* Isaiah Berlin writes of *Capital:*

> It became the central objective of attack and defense. All subsequent forms of socialism hereafter defined themselves in terms of their attitude to the positions taken in it, and were understood and classified by their resemblance to it. After a brief period of obscurity, its fame began to grow and reached an extraordinary height. It acquired a symbolic significance beyond anything written since the age of faith. It has been blindly worshipped, and blindly hated, by millions who have not read a line of it, or have read without understanding its obscure and tortuous prose. In its name revolutions were made; the counter-revolutions which followed concentrated upon its suppression as the most potent and insidious of the enemy's weapons. A new social order has been established which professes its principles and sees in it the final and unalterable expression of its faith. It has called into existence an army of interpreters and casuists, whose unceasing labours for nearly three-quarters of a century have buried it beneath a mountain of commentary, which has outgrown in influence the sacred text itself.

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Marx's brutal and vitriolic polemic style, reinforced by Lenin's example in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* in 1909, has become the official Communist prose style. Two decades earlier, Lenin wrote:

> The 'system of Marx' has a 'polemical character' not because it is 'tendentious,' but because it accurately portrays the theory of all the contradictions that exist in life. Therefore, incidentally, all attempts to assimilate the 'system of Marx' without assimilating its 'polemical character' remain and will remain unsuccessful: the 'polemical character' of the system is only the accurate reflection of the 'polemical character' of capitalism itself.

If the modern communist movement derives almost entirely from Marx, the modern democratic socialist movement derives from a combination of Marx and the independent tradition of Lassalle and British Fabianism. It began with the revisionism of the German Social Democrat Eduard Bernstein, whose book *Evolutionary Socialism,* published in 1899, is its manifesto. With the Russian revolution, the European socialist movement split into reformist parties along Bernstein's lines, who remained in the Second or Socialist International, and revolutionary parties along Leninist lines, who formed the Third. Scandinavian social democratic parties, the British Labour Party and many others have at various times held governmental power, and have instituted such socialist measures as nationalization and confiscatory taxation. Other socialist measures have come into being where the socialist party was part of a governing coalition, or in opposition, or even tiny and powerless, as during Roosevelt's New Deal. In short, Marx's vision has considerably changed the world.

Beyond the confines of those calling themselves Marxists, Marx's ideas have been principally influential in historical theory and sociology. His economics has been generally discarded, and his philosophy quickly went out of fashion. The study of history, however, has been fundamentally altered by Marx's emphasis on material production and the struggle of classes, and it can never return to some of its earlier innocence. As for sociology, Marx is as much its creator as Comte, who named it. *Capital* is one of the great pioneering works in historical sociology, the history of social institutions,

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and Marx's stated intention in it was to found a science of society. He is equally a pioneer in the sociology of knowledge, where his insights were developed by Karl Mannheim and others. Some of these influential texts have been collected in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy,* edited by T. B. Bottomore and Maximilien Rubel in 1956. From the generation of Emile Durkheim and Max Weber to that of Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton, sociologists are the sometimes unwilling heirs of Marx.

In recent years there has been an attempt to rescue Marx and Engels from the Marxists, to see them as humanistic philosophers, moral preachers, even traditional Biblical prophetic voices. In *Science and Society*'s *A Centenary of Marxism* in 1948, the anthropologist Bernhard J. Stern dismissed Engels' *Origin of the Family* as anthropology to praise it as exhortation, "without doubt one of the most influential documents on behalf of the emancipation of women in the world's literature." With Engels, this has concentrated on his writings after Marx's death; with Marx, it emphasizes the young philosopher of alienation of 1844 and 1845, who rooted communist philosophy in love for mankind, and whose stated goal was the enrichment of human existence. Something of Marx's combination of humanism and intellectual rigor has been continued by such communist thinkers as Antonio Gramsci, the founder of the Italian Communist party, Georg Lucaćs, the Hungarian philosopher and critic, and Christopher Caudwell, the brilliant young English critic who died in the Spanish Civil War. Outside the Communist party, a line of French intellectuals has continued to take Marxist humanism seriously: Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse, then André Malraux, then Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, now such writers as Pierre Bigo, whose *Marxisme et Humanisme* in 1953 presented *Capital* as existentialist analysis.[1]

[1] Since this was written, Erich Fromm has published *Marx's Concept of Man,* an edition of the philosophical parts of the *1844 Manuscripts* in a new translation by T. B. Bottomore, accompanied by a long introduction in which Fromm interprets the work as spiritual existentialism in secular language, akin to Meister Eckhart and Zen. Fromm points out that "in the last fifteen years there has been an extraordinary renaissance of discussions on Marx in Germany and France, centered especially around the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts.*" In Germany it has principally been the work of Protestant theologians, he notes; in France, of Catholic priests and socialist philosophers.

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In England and America, the widespread Marxism of the 1930's produced little intellectual rigor. Its politics was soft-headed and sentimental, where it was not worse, and its literature was mostly poor and dull. There were a few exceptions, chiefly the poetry of Auden, Spender and Day Lewis in England. Perhaps the best literature to come out of Marxism is marginal and ambivalent: the early novels of Ignazio Silone and the short stories of Isaac Babel, both torn between the rival pulls of socialism and folk religion. The Russians may yet produce a literature that makes the Marxist "leap into freedom," but they still seem a long way from it. Marx, who preferred Shakespeare and Attic tragedy, would probably not have enjoyed socialist realism.

Frazer's influence and effect on the world has slowly shifted from anthropology to other areas. When *The Golden Bough* was first published, it was generally accepted as a work of scientific anthropology, even, as G. P. Gooch called it, "perhaps the most notable contribution of the age to our knowledge of the human race." The first generation of British anthropologists, including many of the great field ethnographers, took it as the fount of theory in their field. Malinowski, who was inspired to become an anthropologist by reading *The Golden Bough,* called Frazer "the greatest anthropologist of our age." In "Sir James George Frazer: A Biographical Appreciation," written in 1941, he lists some others influenced.

> Ethnographic field-work for the last half century or so has been under the spell of Frazer's suggestions. The work of Fison and Howitt, as well as of Spencer and Gillen in Australia; the famous Cambridge Expedition to Torres Straits led by A. C. Haddon in collaboration with W. H. R. Rivers, C. G. Seligman, and C. S. Myers; the African work of Junod, Roscoe, Smith and Dale, Torday, and Rattray—to mention only a few outstanding names—were carried on under the spiritual guidance of Frazer.

In the next generation, in England and America, a series of reactions set in against all of Frazer's assumptions. One of its leaders was Malinowski himself, who was inspired and spiritually guided by Frazer but had begun to disagree with him as early as his first published writing, on the economic aspect of Australian totemism,

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in 1912. ("His inability to convince seems to contradict his power to convert and to inspire," Malinowski writes in his memorial tribute.) Within a short time Tylor's evolution became unfashionable and was replaced by the Ratzel-Boas history of diffusion; Smith's cross-cultural comparison gave way to Bastian's more restrained comparison within a culture area; Mannhardt's induction from a mass of amputated facts was succeeded by a new concern (led by Malinowski) with traits in their cultural context. Frazer's old-fashioned rationalist psychology, his assumption that motive and purpose are self-evident, was outmoded by the work of another man *The Golden Bough* had fundamentally influenced, Sigmund Freud. (Frazer had always refused to read anything by Freud or his followers.) Where Frazer was not ignored, his approach was derided. Evans-Pritchard writes typically in "The Intellectualist (English) Interpretation of Magic" in 1933:[2]

> The apparent futility of Frazer's analogy between science and magic is due to the fact that he sees both as modes of thinking and not learnt modes of technical behaviour with concomitant speech forms. If he had compared a magical rite in its entirety with a scientific performance in its entirety instead of comparing what he supposes to go on in the brain of a magician with what he supposes to go on in the brain of a scientist, he would have seen the essential difference between science and magic.

In recent years, with evolutionary theory again fashionable in the form of neo-Evolutionism, and cross-cultural comparison no longer shameful, there seems to be something of a swing back. Max Gluckman, one of the newer British anthropologists, in his 1952 Frazer Lecture, "Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa," pays tribute to Frazer's "deep insight" into the nature and function of primitive ritual, and concludes: "But the answer to all these problems lies in comparative research, and here we must always follow in Sir James Frazer's footsteps." Although he is careful not to identify it as anthropology, M. F. Ashley Montague has acclaimed *The Golden Bough* as "one of the great books of our culture written by one of the great scholars of our time." Margaret Mead, in her introduction to the anthology *Primitive Heritage* in 1953, calls for a restoration of books like *The Golden Bough* to anthro-

[2] Evans-Pritchard at least had the grace not to deliver his attacks as his Frazer Lecture. Not so Henri Frankfort, whose 1950 Frazer Lecture, "The Problem of Similarity in Ancient Near Eastern Religions," is a disgraceful attack on Frazer and his followers.

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pological reading lists. It seems unlikely, for obvious reasons, that Frazer's naïve assumptions will ever return to favor or that *The Golden Bough* will ever again be taken for modern scientific anthropology, but when rituals of rebellion in anthropology departments die away, there is no reason why it should not have a secure place as an early classic in the field, as magnificent and defective as the pioneering field studies.

It is in areas outside Anglo-American anthropology that Frazer's influence seems both lasting and growing. Malinowski writes:

> The first and lasting contributions of the French School under the leadership of the dominant and domineering figure of Durkheim, and carried on by Hubert and Mauss, Lévy-Bruhl, Bouglé, and Van Gennep, are unthinkable without the inspiration and achievement of Frazer. In Germany Wundt, Thurnwald, K. T. Preuss and many others have built on Frazer's foundations.

Here we are well into sociology, where Frazer has been received more sympathetically. The sociologist Donald G. MacRae, writing in *A Century of Darwin* in 1958, argues:

> The case for Frazer—who like Spencer is rather under a cloud today—is too complex and technical to be argued briefly here. His use of the comparative method on an enormous scale can be faulted, though the fascinating detail it reveals and the charm of his Augustan style ensure that he is still read. His industry was truly Darwinian, and I believe that his success in subsuming vast masses of data under a few leading ideas was considerable. Unfortunately the anti-evolutionary reaction, largely led by Malinowski, has resulted in neglect of Frazer's achievement. Such a reaction was not surprising, for hypothetical yet untestable evolutionary theories had multiplied endlessly in the early years of the present century. In rejecting these a new freedom was gained, but, alas, much that was solid in the work of a Frazer or a Westermarck was forgotten.

The English anthropological compilers and theorists who were either Frazer's disciples, like Edward Westermarck, Ernest Crawley and Edwin Sidney Hartland, or opponents very much influenced by him, such as R. R. Marett and Andrew Lang, are mostly recognizable now as outside the field of anthropology, as folklorists or comparative religionists. In these areas Frazer's influence continues strong, and one such Frazerian compiler, E. O. James, is still anachronistically producing Frazerian compendia in enormous num-

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bers. As Freud's anthropologist, Frazer is still enshrined in psychoanalysis, where a comparable anachronism, Theodor Reik, is still engaged in turning out books like *Totem and Taboo,* all heavily indebted to Sir James.

It is in his original field of classical studies, however, that Frazer may have produced his greatest effect. In *Reminiscences of a Student's Life* in 1925, Jane Harrison recalls the overwhelming effect of *The Golden Bough.* She writes:

> The happy title of that book—Sir James Frazer has a veritable genius for titles—made it arrest the attention of scholars. They saw in comparative anthropology a serious subject actually capable of elucidating a Greek or Latin text. Tylor had written and spoken; Robertson Smith, exiled for heresy, had seen the Star in the East; in vain; we classical deaf-adders stopped our ears and closed our eyes; but at the mere sound of the magical words 'Golden Bough' the scales fell—we heard and understood.

In a radio address printed in *The Listener* in 1954, Gilbert Murray recalls essentially the same experience. He writes:

> I remember the shock, the combined shock of interest and perhaps of horror, with which *The Golden Bough* burst upon classical scholars like me on its first appearance in 1890. Of course it was not absolutely our first introduction to anthropology. We knew something of Tylor and Andrew Lang and perhaps Mannhardt, perhaps even of Robertson Smith's sacred camel which had to be eaten alive before sunrise. But Frazer, for one thing, overpowered us with his mass of carefully ordered facts. We had heard of 'the beastly devices of the heathen' but had not realised their great number and variety, had not understood the method which underlay their madness.

There is validity in Malinowski's final judgment that more than anything else Frazer was in the line "of great humanists and classical scholars." In the work of Murray and the Cambridge ritualists—Harrison, Francis Cornford and A. B. Cook—the influence of Frazer permanently transformed and revitalized the field of classics, and however much it may appear to have returned to its old deaf-adder ways in recent years (and Frazer was the first to swing back from his own insights), it will never be the same again. The application of these ideas from classical to medieval and modern literature by a brilliant series of literary critics—William Troy, Francis

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Fergusson, Herbert Weisinger, John Speirs, C. L. Barber and others—has given Frazer an importance in literary criticism at least equal to that of Marx and Freud.

In 1959 a new one-volume abridgement of *The Golden Bough,* *The* New *Golden Bough,* was published under the editorship of Theodor Gaster. It is a thoroughly misguided work, attempting to rescue Frazer as up-to-date anthropology by gutting his text, translating his clear and simple terminology into Gaster's opaque terminology, dismissing his theories and bringing his references up to date. What we need is not a face-lifting of Frazer, but a machinery for better using Frazer in his own terms. Criterion should have published, not Gaster's revision, but the *best Golden Bough,* the 1890 two-volume edition, for what it is, an 1890 book. In addition, we badly need the publication of Frazer's correspondence, an adequate biography and a single comprehensive index of all of Frazer's books.

The Golden Bough is not primarily anthropology, if it ever was, but a great imaginative vision of the human condition. Frazer had a genuine sense of the bloodshed and horror behind the gaiety of a maypole or a London-bridge-is-falling-down game, akin to Darwin's sense of the war to the death behind the face of nature bright with gladness, or Marx's apocalyptic vision of capital reeking from every pore with blood and dirt, or Freud's consciousness of the murderous and incestuous infantile wish. The key image of *The Golden Bough,* the king who slays the slayer and must himself be slain, corresponds to some universal principle we recognize in life. It caught the imagination not only of Freud and Bergson, Spengler and Toynbee, but of T. S. Eliot, and produced *The Waste Land.* F. Beck and W. Godin explain Soviet managerial mobility in *Russian Purge and the Extraction of Confession* by "the theory of the grove of Aricia"; John McNulty in a newspaper column sees a prize ring at Madison Square Garden as the sacred wood at Nemi.

In his address on the occasion of the foundation of the Frazer Lectureship in 1921, A. E. Housman spoke of Frazer as though he were comparable to a psychoanalyst, dragging the repressed past back into consciousness. *The Golden Bough,* Housman said, has become a forest. He continues:

> There you have gathered together, for the admonition of a proud and oblivious race, the scattered and fading relics of its foolish childhood,

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whether withdrawn from our view among savage folk and in distant countries, or lying unnoticed at our doors.

Gaster's foreword makes the comparison directly. He writes:

Indeed, what Freud did for the individual, Frazer did for civilization as a whole. For as Freud deepened men's insight into the behavior of individuals by uncovering the ruder world of the subconscious, from which so much of it springs, so Frazer enlarged man's understanding of the behavior of societies by laying bare the primitive concepts and modes of thought which underlie and inform so many of their institutions and which persist, as a subliminal element of their culture, in their traditional folk customs.

H. N. Brailsford, in "The Golden Bough" in the *New Statesman and Nation* in 1941, adds the other two names. He writes:

Darwin, whose disciple and continuer Frazer felt himself to be, had traced the origins and the evolution of our physical body: he gave us the record of our mental growth. He consciously used the same comparative method, and with Marx and Freud he ranks only after the founder of modern biology among the influences which have fixed the thinking of our day.

Frazer's revolution in human thought, Downie writes hopefully as the conclusion to his biography, is "as yet scarce realized."

Freud's alteration of the world is as impossible a subject for discussion in a few pages as Marx's, and no single person could even keep up with all the literature. Where psychoanalysis has been orthodox, from such early followers as Jones and Abraham to analysts who were children when Freud died, is in the application of Freud's theory to new material, and although everyone has minor disagreements with Freudian theory, the orthodox movement needs no discussion here.

The much-publicized rebels who broke away in personal terms—Stekel, Adler, Jung, Rank and Ferenczi—can be similarly skimped. Each produced a body of new theory and each developed a movement and followers, but only Jung's analytical psychology seems influential enough to survive, perhaps because Jung himself survived for so long, and it demands a few words. Christopher Caudwell, in *Studies in a Dying Culture,* explains the defections simply: "Schism is the hallmark of religion." (He does not add that

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his own Marxism is the only modern movement that has been more afflicted with schism and heresy.) There is a truth in Caudwell's explanation, and personality and temperament were at work too, but at least part of the truth is the explanation Freud gives in the *History,* that resistance not only motivated but constituted the dissenting systems. In *Freud or Jung?* Edward Glover concludes: "Jung's spiritual home is in the conscious psychology of the pre-Freudian epoch," and "he seeks to get rid of those embarrassing manifestations of unconscious function which call for explanation." Since the publication of Glover's demolition, the tendency has been, as I think quite properly, to dismiss Jung. Herbert Marcuse writes in *Eros and Civilization:* "Edward Glover's excellent analysis makes a further discussion of Jung's work unnecessary." Marcuse characteristically refers to Jungian psychology as "an obscurantist pseudo-mythology," while Norman O. Brown, in *Life Against Death,* simply calls it "Jungian *Schwärmerei*" (while reproaching the Freudians for leaving so large a range of their subject in Jungian hands).

The neo-Freudians or revisionists who broke away less completely by rejecting important Freudian concepts and retaining others—principally Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, Harry Stack Sullivan and their followers—warrant more space. I have criticized their revisions of Freudian theory in "Psychoanalysis and the Climate of Tragedy" in a forthcoming book of my essays, and I will not repeat it here. My opinion of the revisionists coincides with that of Marcuse and Brown. Marcuse has dismissed them as "retrogression," and observed that their inspirational style "suggests the Power of Positive Thinking to which the revisionist critique succumbs." Brown refers to "the catastrophe of so-called neo-Freudianism" and "the lullabies of sweetness and light which the neo-Freudians serve up as psychoanalysis."

However, the important question that the revisionists raise is the charge that Freudian psychology is ethnocentric or culture-bound, that it universalizes what is only true for our own culture or for Freud's subculture. The ambivalent villain here is again Malinowski who threw out *Totem and Taboo* as ethnocentric fantasy. He wrote:

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It is easy to perceive that the primal horde has been equipped with all the bias, maladjustments, and ill-tempers of a middle-class European family, and then let loose in a prehistoric jungle to run riot in a most attractive but fantastic hypothesis.

Ernest Jones never understood why anthropologists found *Totem and Taboo* so ridiculous. In his biography of Freud, he quotes Paul Radin's opinion in "History of Ethnological Theories" in the *American Anthropologist* in 1929: "For so keen a thinker as Freud his *Totem and Taboo* is really a woeful performance." Jones interprets this as resistance to the primal crime, "the horror aroused by what was considered to be a monstrous and improbable suggestion," rather than the proper scorn of field anthropologists for wild conjectural prehistory. Freud's usefulness for anthropologists is not in the theories of *Totem and Taboo* and *Moses and Monotheism* taken literally, nor even as the discoverer of the Oedipus complex, but as the pioneer explorer of the depths of the personality who made the triumphs of personality-in-culture anthropology possible.

Nor, it is beginning to be noticed, was Freud the cultural absolutist he has been made out to be. Heinz Hartmann, Ernst Kris and Rudolph M. Loewenstein, in "Some Psychoanalytic Comments on 'Culture and Personality'" in *Psychoanalysis and Culture* in 1951, list a few examples of Freud's frequent cultural relativism. They call attention to the awareness in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* in 1904 that whereas self-destructiveness now takes the form of accident or illness, "formerly it was a customary sign of mourning; at other times it expressed itself in ideas of piety and renunciation of the world." In his paper on "A Neurosis of Demoniacal Possession" in 1925, Freud showed the demonological form neurosis took in seventeenth-century Europe. In a note added to his *Autobiographical Study* in 1935, he wrote:

The period of latency is a physiological phenomenon. It can, however, only give rise to a complete interruption of sexual life in cultural organizations which have made the suppression of infantile sexuality a part of their system. This is not the case with the majority of primitive peoples.

If Frazer never read any Freud, and never even acknowledged

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the copy of *Totem and Taboo* that Freud sent him, Harrison was braver. She writes in *Reminiscences of a Student's Life:*

> By temperament I am, if not a prude, at least a Puritan, and at first the ugliness of it all sickened me. I hate a sick-room, and have a physical fear of all obsessions and insanity. Still I struggled on, feeling somehow that behind and below all this sexual mud was something big and real. Then fortunately I lighted on *Totemism (sic) and Taboo,* and at once the light broke and I felt again the sense of release. Here was a big constructive imagination; here was a mere doctor laying bare the origins of Greek drama as no classical scholar had ever done, teaching the anthropologist what was really meant by his *totem and taboo,* probing the mysteries of sin, of sanctity, of sacrament—a man who, because he understood, purged the human spirit from fear.

"For generations," she concludes, "almost every branch of human knowledge will be enriched and illumined by the imagination of Freud." In her *Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* in 1921, Harrison made the fertile marriage of Freud and Frazer that translates the origin-fantasy of *Totem and Taboo* into ritual reality. Among psychoanalysts, only Géza Róheim, the first analyst to acquire field anthropological experience, similarly went beyond Freud, in a series of books on the Australian aborigines and in a remarkable book of theory, *The Origin and Function of Culture,* published in 1943.

The important new movement in psychoanalysis since the death of Freud is the growth of ego psychology. Freud had always been aware of ego gratifications as well as of instinctual gratifications, as his accounts of his ambition-satisfying dreams in *The Interpretation of Dreams,* to take a single example, make clear. The emphasis of his earlier work, however, was largely on the id's primary drives. With *The Ego and the Id* in 1923, he finally turned to ego psychology, and in "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" in 1937, he fully defined ego therapy. The first significant work by others in the field was Anna Freud's *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense,* in 1936. The chief exponents of ego psychology have been Heinz Hartmann, a favorite pupil of Freud's, and Ernst Kris, one of the editors of his collected works. Hartmann's *Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation,* published in 1939 and in English in 1958, is an eloquent reminder that "psychoanalysis, concerned

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as it is with the steering role of drive and thought, has lost sight of the steering done by the will," and is an attempt to redress the balance.

It is sometimes hard to tell ego psychologists from revisionists, but the test seems to be that the ego psychologists do not deny Freud's primary drives, however much they may emphasize ego functions. Erik Homburger Erikson, the author of *Childhood and Society, The Young Man Luther* and a number of important papers, is an interesting example of a borderline case. He is one of the most historically-minded of analysts, and one of the few with anthropological field experience. Sometimes, when Erikson balances ego-measure and id-wish in a dream, or the psychosocial and psychosexual in a disturbed child, he seems one with Hartmann or Rapaport. At other times he seems to deny the importance of the sexual or to translate it into ethical symbolism like Fromm, to get inspirational about "mutuality and considerate love" like Sullivan.

Beyond the deviant schools, the revisionists and the variety of emphases within psychoanalysis itself, Freud's work has been enormously influential on every variety of psychology. It has revolutionized clinical psychology and psychiatry, not only directly, but through the projective tests of Hermann Rorschach and others. It has had equally profound effects on experimental and social psychology, and beyond them on every social science. If this has resulted in marvels of knowledge and insight, it has also resulted in marvels of vulgarization. One wonders what the fastidious stylist Freud would make of some of his consequences, of which the following, which appeared as a newsbreak in *The New Yorker,* is probably typical. It is an abstract from *Psychological Abstracts* of an article on "the life space interview" by Fritz Redl that appeared in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* in 1959. It reads:

> The life space interview may be considered as the surrounding of a youngster's experience at a given time with some form of verbal communication for the purpose of regulating the impact of this experience on the child. It may be in the nature of clinical exploition of life events, for instance: reality rub-in, symptom estrangement, massaging numb value areas, new-tool salesmanship,[3] or manipulation of the boundaries of the self. Or it may be in the nature of emotional first aid on the spot, including such subcategories as: drain-off of frustration acidity; support

[3] *There* is one that Freud would have understood, Howard Nemerov points out.

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for the management of panic, fury, and guilt; communication maintenance in moments of relationship decay; regulation of behavioral and social traffic; umpire services in decision crises as well as in cases of loaded transactions.

If the danger of applied psychoanalysis is vulgarization, the danger within the movement is dogmatic rigidity. It is not to the credit of psychoanalysis that the best recent books on it—Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization,* Philip Rieff's *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist* and Norman O. Brown's *Life Against Death*—have all come from outside it, from a political scientist, a social scientist and a professor of classics. Another classicist, E. R. Dodds, in *The Greeks and the Irrational,* in 1951, turned psychoanalysis on the ancient Greeks with revolutionary effect. It would be pointless to list the writers Freud has influenced, since no serious writer after the generation of Mann and Gide, Proust and Joyce, has been unaffected. It would in fact be hard to find any aspect of modern culture that has escaped Freud's influence.

"The most challenging social science problem of our time," J. F. Brown wrote in *The Nation* in 1937, "lies in the antithesis between Freudian psychoanalysis and Marxian sociology." Perhaps they are not that antithetical. Marx's view of history is oddly like psychoanalysis in some respects. He wrote to Kugelmann in 1869, praising a predecessor: "In the past he rendered a great service by demonstrating how even the apparent accidents of social life possess, in their periodic recurrence and their periodic averages, an inner necessity." H. Stuart Hughes writes in *Consciousness and Society* of a group of modern thinkers, including Marx and Freud:

> Or, to put the matter in moral terms, they agree that the basic characteristic of human experience was the limited nature of its freedom. Men were masters of their fate, they argued, only for limited periods and in strictly limited segments of their activity. The eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century image of man as a self-consciously rational being freely selecting among properly weighed alternatives they dismissed as an antiquated illusion.

Freud apparently read some of Marx and Engels, although he disclaimed either "a thorough knowledge" or "a correct understanding" in a 1937 letter. Joseph Wortis reports in *Fragments of an*

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Analysis with Freud that in 1935 Freud praised Marx for elucidating the materialist side of history, adding, "But people go too far with it." "Communism and psychoanalysis go ill together," he concluded.

Efforts to combine Freud and Marx have been made from the psychoanalytic side principally by Alfred Adler, Wilhelm Reich, Erich Fromm and their followers. Periodic efforts have also been made from the Marxist side, starting with Leon Trotsky and Karl Radek in the 1920's. These ventures, and their failures, are discussed in *The Armed Vision,* as are the more successful syntheses of a number of literary critics, principally Kenneth Burke, William Empson, Lionel Trilling and Edmund Wilson. Since then the impulse has produced two extraordinary books. Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* in 1955 creates a full-blown psychoanalytic socialism, with Marx's revolutionary "leap into Freedom" seen as a leap beyond the reality principle into the glorious world of the pleasure principle, resulting in the conversion of Thanatos into a life instinct. Brown's *Life Against Death,* published in 1959, asks for "a willing suspension of common sense," then goes on to define a future socialist society that will be entirely unrepressed, freed in polymorphous perversity from the tyranny of the genital, as it will be freed from the tyranny of capitalism by accepting its own anality without any necessity for sublimation.

These bold efforts to blend Freud and Marx characteristically demand the early humanist Marx of the *1844 Manuscripts* and the late tragic Freud of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle.* Brown writes:

> And thirdly, the psychoanalytical critique of quantifying rationality has an affinity with Marx, not the Marx of *Das Kapital,* which recognizes the irrationality of modern civilization but locates the irrationality in the 'system'; but the early Marx of the 'economic-philosophic manuscripts,' with his conception of the radical viciousness of the civilized mind, labeled 'the alienated consciousness.'

These thinkers refuse to accept the oversimplification that Marx and Freud represent two fundamentally incompatible lines of thought: Freud the line from Hobbes that despairs of the good society, Marx the line from Rousseau that expects it too easily. No one denies the existence of some incompatibilities. Where Marx

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saw work as the natural human condition, the fullest freedom being not idleness but productive labor, Freud assumes a "natural human aversion to work" that will always require a coercive society. Thrift, which Marx refutes in *Capital* as the "myth" of primary accumulation, Freud demands, so that for him culture is created by an elite capable of self-deprivation and sublimation. Fromm and Riesman have pointed out Freud's psychologizing of nineteenth-century market economy, with the mutual satisfaction of libidinous needs imaged in terms of expenditure and exchange. Some of these antitheses seem to represent a difference in emphasis rather than fundamental disagreement. The coercive and marketing libidinous relations Freud describes *do* exist, and *are* shaped by our culture and its economy (as Marx shows), but quite other relations are implicit in Freud's work, as Marcuse and Brown argue. Marx's leap into freedom is Freud's reclamation of the id (as it is Darwin's exaltation of lowly forms and Frazer's vision of totemic brotherhood). In their integration lies our future.

* * * * *

Ultimately, the language of ideas is metaphor, and essentially metaphor. The arguments are not *clothed* in metaphor, they *are* metaphor. Joseph Schumpeter, in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy,* argues that Marx's metaphors always come when his thought is unclear and suggest "some weakness which must be screened." Patrick Mullahy, in *Oedipus: Myth and Complex,* insists that Freud's metaphors are "a very poor way of conceiving psychology." But for Aristotle in the *Poetics,* metaphor, the perception of likeness in dissimilars, is the sign of genius. Any book of ideas is to some degree metaphoric; a great book of ideas consists of profound metaphors in a realized form, analogous to the traditional forms of literature. If these metaphors are sometimes shocking and surrealistic—the children spun into silk, the cauldron of seething excitement—they are sometimes the ultimate commonplaces we have always known—the tangled bank of life, the web of thought.

The Origin of Species, Capital, The Golden Bough, The Interpretation of Dreams, then, are literature; but are they science, are

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they *true*? By Karl Popper's criterion for a scientific proposition, that it state the conditions whereby it may be refuted, they are all scientific, although perhaps erroneous science. In a deeper sense they are not scientific at all; one cannot refute a vision, although one can replace it by another vision, as we now see the universe through Einstein's eyes rather than through Newton's. The conventional canons of scientific reasoning are that a hypothesis enable one to subsume disparate phenomena under a simple formula that makes them more comprehensible, and to predict the occurrence of similar phenomena in a way susceptible of verification. By these canons, all four are scientific, or at least stated in a scientific fashion. But perhaps *all* science is ultimately metaphor, as Freud suggested in his open letter to Einstein, and even what we call comprehension and verification are only analogical processes. The ideas of Darwin, Marx, Frazer and Freud are then as true as any ideas that explain our world to our satisfaction. If they arose out of the thinker's own nature, if Darwin projected his slow-and-steady personality on nature or Freud his wishful childhood, we can be sure of similar personal correlations underlying even Euclid's geometry and Newton's mechanics. Ideas come from minds, and minds are the products of an individual's nature and experience.

Our four thinkers produced four vast dramatic works for us, four dynamic visions of evolution, that is, of struggle, adaptation and triumph. "Light can be thrown on this by our theory," Darwin wrote in his 1842 essay. "The Professor's explanations were too illuminating, it sometimes seemed;" H. D. wrote of Freud in the 1930's, "my bat-like thought-wings would beat painfully in that sudden searchlight." In the century between those two remarks, four great illuminations, elucidations, enlightenments, were given to the world. In those powerful beams we can see our wriggling ancestor, the bloodstain on our fancy clothes, the corpse from which our grain sprouts, our lustful and murderous wish. If much of what has been dragged out into the light is evil and irrational, the heroic imaginative labor that dragged it out is benign and rational. These great enlightenings are humanist; philanthropic in the root sense, for the love of man.

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Letters to a Friend

ROSE MACAULAY

These letters were written by Dame Rose Macaulay to the Reverend John Hamilton Cowper Johnson, of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (commonly known as the Cowley Fathers), and they are essentially a record of her return to Christian faith and to the sacramental life of the Anglican Church after nearly thirty years' estrangement. But they are also a lively chronicle of Dame Rose's enormously varied interests and doings.

She had known Father Johnson for about two years at the beginning of the First World War when he was on the staff of St. Edward's House, Westminster, but they lost touch soon after 1916 when he was transferred to the Cowley Fathers' community at Boston, Massachusetts. He remained there and they never met again, but occasionally he read her books. In 1950, after reading the American edition of They Were Defeated, *he wrote to her, and her reply began the correspondence from which the following letters are drawn.*

20, Hinde House, Hinde St., W. 1
9th February, 1951

Dear Father,

(Thank you: I rather like that. And I should be delighted when ever you chanced to feel like saying "Rose Macaulay"; lots of people do, among them many I have never met. I think one likes people to address one exactly as they feel like at the moment, don't you. Though, as to that, if one really followed that principle, it's not by any means every one to whom one would always begin

✪ Although ROSE MACAULAY was best known as a novelist, a critic once said, prior to her death in 1958, that "her inner life has perhaps never come out in her fiction, but only in her poems and in her study of religion in English literature." Dame Rose's letters* to Father Johnson, 1950-1952, have been edited by Constance Babington-Smith, her cousin, for publication by Collins in Great Britain and Atheneum in this country.

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"Dear . . ."; "Hated Sir" might sometimes meet the case better.)

I got your wonderful Candlemas letter yesterday; thank you very very much. I had posted you a sea letter the day before, answering yours of 31st. But this one is to be air, reporting how nearly recovered I now am. Still slightly bronchial, and not yet supposed to do anything energetic, like going out early or plunging into swimming pools. (Yes, I am vaguely ichthyous and mer; can't breathe under water, except through one of those lovely goggle masks with air-pipes, which I was using in the Mediterranean last summer, you get such a nice view of the fishes and sea-weed grottos; but I should notice it at once if a shark got into my pool, and should tell the Club secretary. I dare say some Conybeare rector in Devonshire once married a mermaid, tho' it doesn't seem to have got into the family records.)

All this nonsense. What I really want to say is, thank you for always saying the thing I need. And for *not* telling me to put the past behind me, now that it is absolved. And for understanding how one has to face there being no cheap and easy way back, and that Horace was right, and Omar and FitzGerald with their "The moving finger writes, and having writ, Moves on, nor all thy piety and wit Can lure it back to cancel half a line, Nor all thy tears wash out a word of it." And yet that they didn't know the last word, about the potter and his workmanship. I suppose all one can do is try to keep the eyes of one's understanding enlightened and try to have no more black-outs. I do see the point about monthly confessions; I wonder if Fr. Wilkins would see it too. I might tell him it was your idea, which would make him think well of it. And of course it *would* provide opportunities for asking advice. All you say of Fr. Wilkins sounds very reassuring and what one wants. If only I can make the mental effort to write to him and go there. I will try.

Thank you for what you say about my writing, all those years. You know, I have always felt "Anglican"; (heredity, no doubt, like Ellen's mermaidishness). I mean, I have been an *Anglo*-agnostic; and even were I an atheist should be an Anglo-atheist I suppose. For years I scarcely entered a church except to look at the architecture or to attend weddings, funerals or baptisms; but still I was

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an Anglo-non-church-goer. It was a matter of taste and affection, and perhaps a kind of loyalty, rather than of belief; and I suppose this attitude would emerge in what I wrote about it; it is in the blood and bones, at deeper levels than brain or will. Perhaps it is a good thing, now that brain and will begin functioning again, to have that heritage to draw on. A kind of spiritual capital, laid up for one by one's ancestors and upbringing, and by various influences since. Certainly no merit of mine. When people I know have said that if they turned from their present unbelief it would be to Roman Catholicism, I have often asked "Why not Anglicanism?" But they probably feel this insufficiently dramatic. And yet what a thing it is, that re-made pot! In reading that Fuller book (I'll send you the *Spectator,* with my review) I was taken again into that mid-17th century world. Fuller, of course, was something of a collaborator, which doesn't emerge much in this book. But he was able in that way to help outed clergy less fortunate or adaptable. (The *Spectator* has misspelt "Heylin," curse them.)

I am much looking forward to that packet, and particularly to the snapshots. (Which reminds me that, as a signature to those poems that you will get sometime, I appended a recent passport photograph.) I shall like too to have the American P[rayer] B[ook] pages, and the Juvenal. My classical library is not so well restored after its blitzing as it should be. The Greek is better off than the Latin, as Gilbert Murray (that very great and revered man is a most kind friend to me always) gave me a lot of Greek, with his own translations. I should love the Norfolk diary sometime, too. I told you in my sea letter how I had been meeting your relations in Cowper's letters.

I'm glad you like my Mrs. Arthur[1]; I grew fond of her myself. She was based, externally, on a nice woman who kept a small cigarette and sweet shop in Marylebone near me. She looked like that, and had that bonhomous air. The rest—character, career, conversation—I made up. Dear me, the liberties one takes with people scarcely known but just met; they provide a basis, on which one builds some fantastic structure, no doubt with no relation at all to the actual person. What would that nice, no doubt most respect-

[1] See R. M.'s *Keeping up Appearances.*

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able, lady think if she knew? But this habit of novelists only becomes dangerous when they use as a basis someone recognisable whom they know and who will certainly read the book; they invariably think it is *all* meant to be them, and will never believe they were only a starting-point and that the finished character is really something quite unconnected with them. A dangerous trade; one skates on such thin ice. *Keeping up Appearances* offended, I fear, a very nice young woman who worked in the . . . Library, and who thought I had drawn her in one of the Arthur girls, when actually she was definitely higher in the social scale than that. Of course some novelists . . . are completely ruthless; they put in not only real people but real situations, some of them supposedly unknown to the people's friends, such as secret love affairs, jiltings, etc., and leave a trail of misery behind them. Very cruel and unfair. Novelists should have a sense of responsibility towards those they might injure, like car drivers, and not run them down from behind.

Yes, thank you, I am well looked after when ill. A nice char, who will stay on if wanted, and a number of obliging friends, of all ages and sexes and avocations, who rally round with sick-room amenities, such as flowers and fruit, and offers to shop, post letters, get library books, come and get my meals, come and talk. This last I don't allow with flu; they would catch it, and their charming chatter would exhaust me. This is the result of living in London and being naturally gregarious (one need never lack for company). Actually, I rather like being alone when ill; it is more restful, and gives one a chance to read and to think.

Your letter set me thinking about the pursuing purposes of God, and I remembered Francis Thompson's "I fled him down the nights and down the days; I fled him down the arches of the years; I fled him down the labyrinthine ways Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears, I hid from him, and under running laughter. Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears, From those strong Feet that followed, followed after. But with unhurrying chase, And unperturbèd pace, Deliberate speed, majestic instancy, They beat, and a Voice beat, More instant than the Feet. . . ." And then, "I stand amid the dust of the mounded years—My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap. . . . Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds From

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the hid battlements of eternity; Those shaken mists unsettle, then Round the half glimpsèd turrets slowly wash again, But not ere him who summoneth, I have first seen. . . . Now of that long pursuit Comes on at hand the bruit; That Voice is round me like a bursting sea. . . ."[2]

Unhurrying pursuit; yes. It is we who refuse to be hurried. But it doesn't tire his kindness out, and he gives us these fresh chances, and lays these plans, in "the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us." All very odd. *Why?* That seems the enormous riddle of the human race and of God. Or, if not odd, very overwhelming.

Of course I am very sorry that I shall never see you in England; but I do understand how exhausting it would be, and it would be worse than anything to see you getting ill. I can imagine feeling as you describe, though actually I am a fairly happy traveller. But what a fuss those set over us have agreed to make about our getting about. The young scarcely believe me when I say that before 1914 we had no passports, let alone visas or currency restrictions. Driving down Spain, I could never get off from anywhere before about 10.30, because the hotel didn't extract my passport from the police to whom they had sent it the night before, and who held on to it with the firmest Spanish apathy and tenaciousness. And the Americans putting half of us on Ellis Island for presumed un-American activities . . .[*sic*] All very irritating and wearing.

Fr. Wilkins said he knew a sister of mine in India.[3] She works in a mission (S.P.G.)[4] school at Ranchi. We are fond of each other, but quite unlike, and I suppose have less in common than I have with any of the rest of my family. She is devoted to her work and her untouchable pupils, and is very intelligent and good, and translates English books into a number of Indian dialects as easily as I could into French or Italian, which seems to me very admirable. No doubt Fr. Wilkins can do the same. When well enough, I want to attend Canon Raven's (C.E. Raven, Master of Christ's) Lent lectures on "Christianity in the world of modern science." Biology is

[2] *The Hound of Heaven.*
[3] Eleanor Macaulay.
[4] Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

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his subject, and he is interesting. We used to know him at Cambridge in old days. He is a pacifist. I think I am too.

When I think of the time I must cost you, and the trouble, and the stamps . . . [*sic*] Well, you do know how grateful I am—But I have been such a *job* to you, on the top of all your others—I am ashamed. But—well, anyhow, I am

Yours affectionately,
R.M.

20 Hinde House, Hinde St., W. 1
16 February, 1951

Dear Father,

Being in bed again, with another spot of temperature, I will please myself by writing a *very beautifully written* sea letter, just to show you that I can, if I try hard. It is a bore, this relapse when I thought I was recovered, and very interrupting to my life. However, I am not seriously ill, and have several nice books to read—one on Pompeii and Herculaneum, very detailed and exciting; one on the 1st Crusade (oh dear, what behaviour went on!); Wm. Law's *Liberal and Mystical Writings;* a rather good and ingenious thriller; and St. Augustine's *Confessions*. Do you think he really (as he says he did) liked sinning for sinning's sake, stole the pears not to eat them but because he liked stealing? That does seem to be what actuates some juvenile delinquents and young hooligans—all that wanton destruction they do—but it must, I think, be unusual, in a character like his. Most people do it because they want the pears, and let higher principles go by the board—but he "*non ob aliud, nisi quia non licebat*"[5]—or so he says. But then of course he kept bad company, ran about in a gang. What interesting reading he is. But what a labyrinthine, intricatory soul (as Donne would say). All that about ought he, as praise is unwholesome, to lead a low and degraded life that no one can praise? And all his involved enquiries into the nature of time. But when he writes of God and the soul, he is often magnificent. I imagine that Francis Thompson was affected by him when he wrote *The Hound of Heaven*. And

[5] "For no other reason than that it was forbidden."

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he is soaked in the psalms, and quotes them so effectively—"*quoniam tu inluminabis lucernam meam, domine, deus meus, inluminabis tenebras meas*"[6] . . . "*ut liberes nos omnino quoniam coepisti . . .* "[7] one couldn't want better "transitory prayers." (*17th Feb.*) Did Marcus Aurelius ever steal pears? I am reading him too; about all he learned from his good examples—"From my mother, the fear of God and generosity, and abstention not only from doing ill but from the very thought of doing it; and furthermore to live the simple life, far removed from the habits of the rich." From other examples, not to be taken up with trifles, not to believe wizards and miracle-mongers, not to keep quails, not to resent plain speaking, to be aware that he needed amendment and training for his character, not to commit breaches of good taste, to shew himself ready to be reconciled to those who have trespassed against him, and meet them half-way when they seem to be willing to retrace their steps. Never to exhibit any symptom of anger or any other passion, but to be "at the same time utterly impervious to all passions and full of natural affection," to possess great learning and make no parade of it, and to look to nothing else, even for a moment, save Reason alone.

And so on. What counsels of perfection! He was surrounded by good examples of all kinds, best of all his father, who did not build for the love of building, gave no thought to his food, and did *not bathe at all hours.* "Thou hast but a short time left to live. Live as on a mountain." He would have been shocked by St. Augustine—except that Reason bade him be shocked by no one, seeing that men are as they are. They are an interesting contrast. Both commanding intellects, both full of good aspirations and self-awareness and God-awareness. I wish M.A. could have lived early enough to have met S. Paul; an interview between them would have been interesting. Both agreed on "Whatsoever things are, etc . . . think on these things."

The question of the developing sense of morality is fascinating. When do we get to the point of rejecting War? I have long felt that

[6] "Thou also shalt light my candle: The Lord my God shall make my darkness to be light." Ps. 18. 28.

[7] "But do thou set us wholly free, since thou hast begun."

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one great international gesture would be worth while; saying, just once, to potential aggressors, "Go ahead if you must and do your worst; *we* do not intend to behave like barbarians, whatever barbarians may do to us." This might mean occupation and domination by some barbarian power like Russia; very unpleasant, pernicious and horrible; but could not be more so than waging war ourselves, with all its cruel atrocities. And it just *might* help to start a new era. But I fear there is no hope of any such civility in a barbaric world, at present, and we shall go murdering each other by radio-active bombs, and destroying all that's left of beauty. We here rather dread the American state of mind; it might lead to some rash act.

I seem to be getting better to-day, and shall soon be fit to do a little typing. I fear this letter may have deteriorated in script as it proceeded. Oh I do get bored with being ill, it fogs the mind so—I should like to be intelligently systematic about prayer, e.g.

Don't you dislike all this eloquent bombast about defending "the British Way of Life"? After all, it's not so good, nothing to boast about. I prefer frank jingoism to sanctimonious patriotism, on the whole.

Well, I have enjoyed writing to you, and must now stop. "Not to write to Fr. Johnson at all hours," M. Aurelius's father might have resolved.

Yours affectionately,
R.M.

20 Hinde House, Hinde St., W. 1
16th March, 1951

Dear Father,

Thank you for your very pleasing letter of 9th, posted 10th. I got out Darwell Stone[8] yesterday. Those spacious "Religion and Philosophy" shelves on the London Library's top floor, divided into so many sections, "Rationalism," "Judaism," "Metaphysics," "Biblical Criticism," etc., etc., etc., are nice to rummage about among, and I come on all kinds of things that I look into while

[8] Rev. Darwell Stone (1859-1941), Anglo-Catholic theologian.

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there or take home if they seem worth it. Shall I like D.S.? He seems hugely learned; perhaps over legalistic and patristic for the layman; and, as you say, what undreamt of questions he answers! He distrusted *Lux Mundi*,[9] I see; thought it didn't square with Revelation. But all very interesting and instructive. Fr. Andrew[10] I didn't find, but think I may have looked for him stupidly under "Andrews," and shall try again. He must have been delightful. I love that answer to the worried Anglican. I was interested yesterday, in reading Dr. Inge's *Diary of a Dean* (full of amusing acidities, inter alia, such as that he felt when made Dean of St. Paul's "like a mouse watched by 4 cats," the cats being the 4 canons) to come on an entry by Mrs. Inge for 29th Oct., 1925: "One of our most successful little dinners. Lady Sandhurst, Mr. A. L. Mumm, Rose Macaulay, Sir Maurice de Bunsen, Sir Ernest Wild, Lady Burghclere, *John Bailey* [*sic*]." So I did meet J.B. I have quite forgotten doing so, and indeed that particular dinner; I obviously wasn't next him. I wish I had been, I should have enjoyed it. Yes, he was wrong, had got hold of the wrong end of the Christian life (as from the opposite angle T. à Kempis in some moods had). He should have read a v.g. book I am now reading, by the 18th c. Jesuit Père de Caussade, which is full of illumination and wisdom.[11] He speaks of "un Dieu toujours reçu dans *tout ce qu'il y a sur la terre* . . . Ce qui nous instruit, c'est ce qui nous arrive d'un moment à l'autre . . . Il faut donc écouter Dieu de moment en moment, pour être docte dans la théologie vertueuse, qui est tout pratique et expérimentale. . . . Le moment présent est toujours comme un ambassadeur qui déclare l'ordre de Dieu . . . *toutes les routes et toutes les manières l'avancent également vers le large et infini.* Tout lui est moyen; tout lui est instrument de saintété, sans aucune difference." I like that idea, of each moment being an ambassador accosting us from God with a message how to deal with it. Of *course* it enlarges life; I don't need to tell you how much. It adds another

[9] A series of essays on the Religion of the Incarnation edited by Charles Gore and published in 1889, which included new critical views of the Old Testament.

[10] *The Life and Letters of Father Andrew, S.D.C.; edited and compiled by K. E. Burne* (1948).

[11] *L'Abandon à la Providence Divine,* by J. P. de Caussade (1675-1751), first published in 1867. (English translation, *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence, with Introduction by David Knowles,* 1933.)

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dimension to everything; or lights a candle behind things; both. I wonder if this will go on, in spite of the drag and suction of the hampering, corrupting past. One can't, of course, go on year after year, so many years, doing what one knows to be wrong, selfish, dishonourable, deceitful, unfair, against God's will; without being weakened and corrupted and partly blinded, and this must hamper and clog, perhaps prevent one ever becoming what one might have become. I really am trying; though of course not enough. But it will be a poor job at best. But never never shall I be tempted to think that religion doesn't cover and include everything, or could be narrowing. The *Imitatio,*[12] of course, is monastic in angle. I have only the English translation, which was given me by my godmother when I was 13. I was, I suppose, in some ways, an odd child; for I fell for this book; I remember sitting in the top branches of trees and reading about how I ought not to dispute about the Trinity, and how it was vanity to hunt after honours and climb to high degree (but I did aspire to being head of my form as a rule), and that I should withdraw my heart from the love of visible things (which was quite impossible, and he shouldn't have suggested it) must shun familiarity and company, and not be drawn by one's sensual desires to "rove abroad," for, "what carriest thou home but a burdened conscience and a distracted heart?" None of these precepts did I follow; indeed my mother threw cold water on them; but of course he is also full of excellent moral teaching for anyone. Yes, I agree about many de-Christianised novelists. I have just been asked to review Graham Greene's new book (not a novel, but a collection of essays, old and new, called *The Lost Childhood*) for *The Times Literary Supplement*. It may be interesting. He, of course, is *not* de-Christianised, but Romanised. . . . He has a great natural sense of guilt, I think. Did you read *The Heart of the Matter,* his last novel? . . . One sometimes wonders if Roman Catholicism is very good for the moral sense, with its almost mechanical view of the wiping out of sin by absolution. But of course this doesn't apply to the well instructed. All the same, how much I prefer Anglicanism! (If you read it, tell me some time what you think of it.)

[12] The *Imitatio Christi* of Thomas à Kempis.

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I think these sea letters are very dilatory, except sometimes. I sent you mine (from bed) on 18th Feb., and it hadn't reached you by 10th March. Not that it had anything of importance in it. I think it was just chat, about books I had been reading, etc. But it seems absurd to take all that time crossing the Atlantic; *we* don't.

Later. What extraordinary things clergymen sometimes want to know, and worry over! But it would have been worth while to write and put *any* question to Dr. Stone, to get such marvellous answers and learn so much about church law down the ages. The Resurrection bodies of the Patriarchs, should a baptized person marry a catechumen, did Dr. Pusey invoke the saints, are the Channel Islands in schism . . . [*sic*] all these queries evoking such a flow of profound knowledge. I am enjoying reading it, and, should anyone ever ask me any of these questions, shall be in a position to impress them greatly with my erudition. I fear I can't hope to impress *you,* as you have access to the book and would know where I got my information from. Goodbye.

Yours affectionately,
R.M.

[*Postmark "London, W. 1"*]
12th August, 1951

Dear Father,

Thank you immensely for all kinds of things—your air letter posted 6th Aug., which came 3 days ago, and the lovely packet of books (so beautifully done up, as usual—your packages always fill me with shame and inferiority!). The very interesting and charming little Horace calendar and anthology pleases me much; it is interesting to see which things of his appealed to various writers of various periods and nations; and the calendar opens a fresh set of associations for each day—I like to be reminded of the anniversaries of the Roman conquest of Britain, the death of Augustus, the eruption of Vesuvius in 79, the death of Mark Anthony, etc. (all this month), as well as of the Transfiguration, the Assumption, and St. Radegunde; it enlarges one's view. I would much rather commemo-

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rate at Mass the Roman conquest and the births of Cicero and Erasmus and the Feast of Lupercalia (15th Feb.) than some of these rather obscure, not to say potty, minor saints who are well thought of at St. Thomas's and the Annunciation and keep intruding themselves into the services there. Then, the Latin hymns—what a *very* nice book to have. I know few of them, and here are riches to study. Some, of course, are in English in our hymn-books; some I think of making, at my leisure (if any ever) translations of. Many are very fine and beautiful. Thank you too for the little Catullus; the translations are quite racy, and do catch the humour of the Latin very well. And the little wallet, so neat, so useful, containing the photographs of the Monastery chapel, very attractive, and the Holbein Erasmus. I'm glad you are an Erasmus devotee. I am too. If only he and Colet and More had had their way with the church in England, and it had developed in freedom and scholarly breadth and light, without the rude intrusion of the Reformation! Where would it be to-day? If no Reformation, then, I suppose no Counter-Ref., and none of those exaggerated excesses of fanatical piety; just a development into greater sanity, reason and light and spirituality and learning. Would the Vatican have supported such a rational development, which would certainly have included and accepted all the new learning as it came along—Copernicus and all—or would it still have stuck its head in the sand and hunted down heretics and burnt them as it had through the Middle Ages? And would it be as reactionary and bigoted as it is to-day? We can't know. But whether or not, the Anglican branch of it would have developed more mellowly than it did, and with less conflict. Though I suppose there must always have been the Puritan element fighting against the Catholic. These questions of "If . . . " are intensely interesting, aren't they?

No thank you, my char isn't going to get any of those books; however much they might enlarge her mind. I want them all myself.

Your letter is full of interesting things. I'm glad Fr. Pedersen liked our lunch together; I did too, immensely. We are to meet again on 28th, for which night I have, at his request, got seats for a play, which I was to select. I chose *Waters of the Moon,* said to be

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v.g. and with a brilliant cast, including Edith Evans and Sybil Thorndike, so I hope we shall enjoy it. I wanted to find something Fr. P. would like; though, as to that, I fancy he would be prepared to enjoy anything, he seems full of zest. I wonder how he enjoyed *A Sleep of Prisoners,* the Christopher Fry play at St. Thomas's that he was going to. I must ask him. He is now at Oxford. . . .

By the way, the kind man has sent me such a very good book—the *Oxford American P[rayer] B[ook] Commentary;* most interesting. I haven't read much of it yet, but it is packed with information about the sources of prayers, dates of their adoption into the various P.B.s, etc.—just what I always like to know (as you know). It is good of him. We got talking about the American P.B., and this arose out of it.

I expect you are right about the swimming jeep as transport; anyhow, I see no chance of getting such a trip at present. Though, as to my occupation as *auctor historiarum commenticiarum,*[13] such an experience would help me in that, and might produce a good story about it, without those false touches that betray the romancer, and in which they said that Pythias indulged in his travel tales of the Outer Ocean and Ultima Thule, such as jelly in the sea, ice, slush, etc. (All quite true, in his case.) Still, I shall visit the I. of Wight in a steam packet this week, my car (strictly monobious) in the hold. I go on Friday 17th till 24th, with my sister,[14] who is spending a fortnight of her holiday there. If the weather is tolerable, it will be nice. I like the Island, with its air of Victorian gentility, its conservatory houses at Ryde (where I shall be), its beaches and bays on the north side, its lovely interior, full of history. I must take my book with me and my typewriter and do a little work in the evenings.

I am interested in your quotation from Erasmus about Colet and his possible reasons for infrequent Masses. I suppose it is true that different practices about it suit different people; and also the same person at different times. At present I am not doing very well with it. I went this morning (Sunday) to St. Thomas's, for the

[13] "Author of fictitious histories."
[14] Jean Macaulay.

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rather ignoble reason that it was at 9, but wished I hadn't, and shan't go again I think. I don't follow the service really, and missed the moment to go up to the altar; there was only one other person, and I wasn't noticing him, and I am used to the priest turning round and saying clearly "Behold the Lamb of God," then one knows, but at St. T. they do nothing of the sort, and perhaps don't really mean people to communicate. And they have too many Hail Marys and other prayers to the B.V.M., and I'm not really very Mariolatrous. The church I like best, after Grosvenor [Chapel], is All Saints, where the service is very beautiful and dignified, and much more P.B., tho' the chairs are not adequately anchored, and slide about. But I shall go to it in future till my chapel re-opens.

About *Mary Lavelle* again—I suppose it is difficult for a novelist not to be, so to speak, overset by love, the strongest emotion that most people ever feel in their lives. So they are apt to lose sight of the other considerations that war against it; as in actual life we lose sight of these. To them it seems that everything must take a back place beside it, when it bursts on them in its full strength; and they visualise a future in which it will always be the strongest thing. For, of course, it does last a long time sometimes, even a wrong love; and its very strength blinds those who feel it to its wrongness, often, and might do so for many years. Everything else pales in its light, and it seems its own justification. Of course novelists should get outside this and look at it with detachment, in its right perspective against the standards of right and wrong that are really the ultimate thing and the eternal thing. But the Marys and the Juanitos don't do this in the first rapture of their love, and the creator of them and their situation throws him or herself into their feelings and writes of them as from the inside, instead of as the philosopher assessing from other standards their predicament. If she followed them down the years, she would presumably follow their changing feelings (so far as they did change)—only they don't always. And, as someone says somewhere, each wrong act brings with it its own anaesthetic, dulling the conscience and blinding it against further light, and sometimes for years. I am not defending Kate O'Brien . . . I am only trying to explain the sort of way such situations may work on the minds of those who

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imagine and describe them in novels. It is, I think, partly a lack of objectiveness. I never myself, I think, represented such things in a triumphantly favourable light in a novel . . . and this, I suppose, was how Mary Lavelle, and Juanito, and perhaps Kate O'Brien, saw it. Human passions against eternal laws—that is the everlasting conflict. And human passions use every device to get the best of it, and set themselves above the laws. All very tragic and pitiful; but writers about it should be on the right side—if they can. You know, I sometimes wonder why, knowing what you do about me, you care to know me at all. But I have long since accepted that, with gratitude. I suppose 45 years of going about in long clothing teaches tolerance and understanding, as well as the other things, such as handing on the word of God.

I have been looking again at the *American P. B. Commentary,* which is full of interesting information. I read that the collect for 11th Sunday after Trin[ity] was a Gelasian collect that ran "that we, running to thy promises, may be made partakers of thy heavenly treasure," and was altered by the 1662 revisers to "that we, running the way of thy commandments, may obtain thy [gracious] promises." I like "running to thy promises." I wonder how it goes in the original Latin. There is a similar change in Trin. 13. I hadn't realised how extensively the 1662 revisers revised the words of the 1549 P. B. Often, I think, improving them; sometimes the opposite. I see it says "the popular English name for Epiphany is Twelfth Day"; but actually of course it is never this, always Twelfth Night, surely.[15] In Trin. 4 *"finally"* was added to the Latin "that we lose not the things eternal." That seems a pity, as this commentary says; the eternal things are *now*. You see how interesting this book is.

I think I shall air-mail this, and write by sea later from the Island. I wanted to tell you that your books arrived safely and give satisfaction, without delay. But I really will sea-mail the next. (Where are my good epistolary resolutions going to? I keep getting seduced by this so expeditious air.) With love.

Yours affectionately,
R.M.

[15] Footnote by R. M.: "No, I am wrong. I see the O[xford] D[ictionary] does give 'Twelfth Day.' But it seems less common."

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So . . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Not many of our contemporaries would admit to taking either Rousseau or Augustine very literally or very seriously as a guide. Yet the question they raise is still (however differently we may phrase it) as critical, both practically and theoretically, as it ever was. Are we naturally good or naturally evil?

Most contemporary sociology and most contemporary education is based upon Rousseau's assumption. Whenever we defend permissive education or argue that crime is the result of some defect in our political or social system, we are Rousseauists whether we admit it or not. "The reality of evil" is a phrase now seldom used except by theologians and that considerable number of imaginative writers whom theology has influenced. No politician, psychologist, counselor or sociologist admits it. Even the Roman Catholic "Boy's Town" brandishes the slogan, "There is no such thing as a bad boy," and it is an indication of the prevalence of Rousseauism even in unexpected places that this heresy has never been officially rebuked. (Unless I completely misunderstand Catholic doctrine, it insists that all boys, like all men, are naturally "bad.")

Perhaps Irving Babbitt was right in his seemingly fanatical insistence that Rousseau was the dominant influence upon modern literature, modern society and modern life—whether Babbitt was right or wrong in lamenting the fact. The very phrase "juvenile delinquent," not "juvenile criminal," is another evidence of the same conviction that wrongdoing must be learned. A teen-ager, we feel, hasn't lived long enough yet to have been so thoroughly corrupted as to merit the term "criminal." He must still be trailing clouds of glory from heaven which is his home.

A year or two ago I confessed in one of these pages that "I am a reality-of-evil man myself," and I suppose that the remark was misinterpreted by some to mean that I accepted Augustinianism in an orthodox, Christian sense; perhaps even that I blamed everything on Eve and her perverted taste in fruit. Such is hardly the case. But there is indeed something disastrously wrong in the assumption that since all evil deeds can be explained as merely misguided they should never be punished, always understood and treated.

Those who take that attitude—and they constitute, I believe, the vast majority of the enlightened and liberal-minded—seem to see no way out of a dilemma. Since human nature must be either good or bad, they must choose between permissiveness on the one hand and repression on the other. You must, they think, either "break the child's will" as the Victorians put it, or you must give him "uncritical love," no matter how he behaves. Similarly you must either return to the brutality of the eighteenth-century criminal law or take it for granted that there are no bad boys—or bad men either—and that, therefore, both the delinquent and the criminal should be understood, helped, treated and re-educated, but never punished.

Neither system seems to have worked very well. The humane are fond of pointing out that the most ferocious laws did not abolish crime. They are less ready to admit that

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"modern methods" haven't either. If the first do not really deter, the second, if you may credit statistics, do not cure. There seems no doubt that adult crime and, even more strikingly, juvenile delinquency, have been increasing during the very period when both law and the social system are growing continuously more enlightened. *Post hoc* is not necessarily *propter hoc*. Most liberals will insist merely that we are not enlightened enough; that what is called for is even more complete commitment to the theory that the criminal must be simply a sick man, and that the society which made him sick should bear the responsibility for the fact.

When faced with a dilemma of this kind the most characteristic technique of recent thinking—I don't know who first used it—is to say that we are asking the wrong question or asking it in terms that do not fit the situation. This seems to me obviously the case here. "Are men naturally bad?" suggests "sin," and that is a word with connotations highly distasteful to the modern mind. If we were to ask instead whether men are naturally "civilized," it seems to me that the answer would be immediately obvious. They are not. And, to me at least, that answer suggests a more sensible attitude than any usually taken toward the delinquent and the criminal. They are not necessarily sick, or the victims of something aggressively corrupting in their society. The wrong that society has done them is a negative one. It has failed to civilize them.

To be as orderly and as regardful of the rights of others as civilized life requires is not "natural." Whatever tendencies in such directions we may have inherited from our animal ancestors are simply not adequate to a way of life so very new as even the most primitive civilizations are. In that sense men are not born "good" and they will not become "good" if merely uncorrupted. So far as my observation goes, neither the child, the adolescent nor the adult is likely to become a good or civilized man unless positive pressures (sometimes including deliberate punishment) are put upon him. To say that all men are born good is a seductively pleasing idea. To say that all men are born civilized is obviously preposterous.

When I first began to practice literary journalism in the twenties, one of the great debates was between the "realists" or "naturalists" and the members of the school of Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More and Stuart Sherman, all of whom accused the naturalists of reducing the analysis of human motive to a mere "theory of animal behavior." To do anything of the sort, I agree, is to libel human nature. But when a question arises concerning that human nature and what it consists of, it is certainly wrong not to consider what light can be thrown by asking whether some tendency we are tempted to describe as either a purely human virtue or a late corruption and perversion is not actually part of the subhuman inheritance. If, for example, Proudhon was right and "property is theft," then thievery must be pretty deeply rooted in our animal nature. Modern study has made it clear that a "defense of territory" is one of the major keys to the understanding of animal behavior and a defense of territory is the most primitive expression of a sense of property rights. That alone should be sufficient to give pause to those who found their utopias upon the assumption that the desire to own, being merely the product of a corrupt social system, could easily be got rid of. Even the Communists seem to have recognized promptly that this desire to own is not easily destroyed and that the despised incentives of capitalism do continue to be useful.

When I asked a somewhat cynical friend what he thought of Robert Ardrey's *African Genesis* he replied: "When in college I was taught that man's remotest ancestor was an unusually intelligent ape I never quite believed it. Ardrey seems to prove that this ancestor was actually a singularly unpleasant one. And you know that makes the whole thing seem a lot more probable."

Perhaps that is too desperately simple both as a summary of and as a response to a brilliant book solidly founded upon the best and most recent information that science has been able to gather. But it is by

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no means entirely beside the point. Although Mr. Ardrey never says in just the words I chose that man is by nature "uncivilized" rather than either "good" or "bad," this is one way of stating what his thesis comes down to. The missing link (or at least the latest candidate for that dubious distinction) came to dominate his environment not because he was especially intelligent, but because, unlike the other apes, he was a predator and therefore aggressive. His earliest invention was a weapon, and to this day weapons of one kind or another tend to be the most passionately sought product of human technology.

This basic fact which, seemingly, is forced upon us by recent anthropology is something with which we must reckon. So also are certain other basic facts that are emerging from studies of animal behavior. One of them is that sex (which we like to think evolved into love) is not, as Darwin supposed, the most fundamental dynamism in the living organism. The impulse to defend territory (that is, the desire to own, privately and exclusively) plays an equal if not greater role. And the desire to own is rather more resistant than even sex to sublimation.

The other basic fact is that society is not, as Vico announced centuries ago and as sociologists sometimes like to assume, a purely human invention since its beginnings also can be traced far back in evolutionary history. If that sounds encouraging it is not as completely so as at first sight appears. It means that man cannot, as he has often dreamed of doing, invent a workable society on a basis that to him is purely rational and human. He must reckon not only with the instincts of the animal but also with those features of society which are so ancient that they too are nearly instinctive.

None of this is radically new. The facts upon which the interpretation is based have been increasingly recognized by anthropologists and students of animal behavior. But the implications are too novel and too disturbing always to have been faced clearly. Mr. Ardrey's thesis does not imply a necessary return to the simplicity of the social Darwinism of the late nineteenth century. No competent student of evolution today believes that the evolutionary process itself was so simple as early Darwinism made it. The struggle for survival does not explain everything. The living organism "wanted" (dreadful word) to become "higher" (although no one is quite sure what that means) as well as "more fit to survive." Hence a society exclusively and ruthlessly based upon the devil-take-the-hindmost principle is not actually analogous to the evolutionary process.

Nevertheless, to accept the theory that man is born uncivilized although not evil, and that he must reckon with his inheritance, does mean to remember that he is not as readily plastic as we sometimes like to believe. Human nature is (for both good and ill) a reality. It is something far less easy to deal with than the theoretical blank slate upon which conditioning writes what other more healthful conditions can erase whenever it seems desirable.

None of this is, and none of it is made to seem in Mr. Ardrey's book, an invitation to hopelessness. But it does seem to mean that utopianism is even more unrealistic than it used to appear, and that the road even to amelioration is not quite the one that either the naïve permissionists or the proponents of social engineering propose.

Mr. Ardrey's conclusion, to which he admits a somewhat tenuous hope, seems to me the weakest part of his thesis—not because it is hopeful, but because his determination to avoid facile solutions makes him draw rather darker than need be the picture of what our African Genesis implies. That "conscience," which man seems somewhat mysteriously to have developed and upon which we sometimes build the hope that he may eventually become a pleasanter creature, Mr. Ardrey dismisses as a delusion and more of a threat than a promise. It has been appealed to, he points out, in order to justify the greatest of crimes in both private conduct and public policy. It is less often something we follow than something we invent to justify the acts our animal nature inspires us to perform. At best, so the rela-

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tivist will add, it merely approves or disapproves in accord with what a particular culture has come to accept or reject.

In place of this untrustworthy conscience Mr. Ardrey attempts to put something that may actually be the same thing under a different name but that is even more difficult to define. He calls it a sense of, or a desire for, order; and he discovers it, far back in time, already modifying to some extent the purely aggressive impulses long before our immediate ancestor the predatory ape learned how to make aggressiveness more effective than it had ever been before. Mr. Ardrey does not seem to dismiss Reason quite so summarily as he does Conscience, but the case for and against one or the other seems to me much the same. Too often, perhaps usually, Reason also is only rationalization. We convince ourselves of what we would like to believe. As Nietzsche said, if you wish to understand a philosopher do not ask what he says; find out what he wants. But if, as it seems to me, Reason can be, and at least occasionally is, more than rationalization, then I do not see why Conscience sometimes may not also be a genuine guide. Just where two such remarkable things as Reason and Conscience may have come from, I do not know. Perhaps they emerge from feeble hints of some such independent powers in the lower animals. But in some individuals they do occasionally put in an astonishing appearance. As Pope said, they afford "at least a glimmering light."

A few of the animals far below the anthropoids (some wasps, for example, and one species of finch) use tools although they do not make them. The evidence suggests that our singularly unpleasant great-grandfather broke skulls with a stone. Perhaps when he had practiced this effective technique, it may sometimes have occurred to him dimly that to kill more than he intended to eat was not quite nice.

One of Swift's *obiter dicta* occurs to me so often that I have probably cited it before in these pages, but it comes in here very pat. "I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed." That they are, nevertheless, sometimes ashamed may be the last best hope of mankind.

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REAPPRAISALS

The Desperate Morality of The Plays of Tennessee Williams

ARTHUR GANZ

"Moralist," desperate or not, may seem a perverse appellation for a playwright whose works concern rape, castration, cannibalism and other bizarre activities, but in examining the work of Tennessee Williams it is exactly this point—that he is a moralist, not a psychologist—that should be borne in mind. Williams' powers of characterization are real, but they are not his central gifts: witness *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* which contains Big Daddy, one of Williams' most striking characterizations, but which fails none the less because in this play Williams' moral vision becomes blurred, and it is in the clarity and force of that moral vision that his strength as a playwright lies.

Admittedly, Williams' morality is not the morality of most men, but it is a consistent ethic, giving him a point of view from which he can judge the actions of people. Yet to say that Williams rewards those who, by his standards, are virtuous and punishes those who are evil is to oversimplify, for in the world of Williams' plays, good often has a curious affinity with evil. Beneath the skin of the Christlike martyr destroyed by the cruel forces of death and sterility lies the disease, the sin that has made his creator destroy him. The character who is most fiercely condemned may at the same time be the one for whom pardon is most passionately demanded. From the self-lacerating desire simultaneously to praise and to punish stems the violence that disfigures so many of Williams' plays.

To understand this violence in Williams' work we must first look at his gentlest plays, those in which the virtuous are rewarded, for here is most directly revealed the morality by which the guilty are later so terribly condemned. Surprisingly, one of Williams' most significant plays is an indifferent and undramatic one-acter about the death of D. H. Lawrence, only slightly redeemed by the audacious and successful title, *I Rise in Flame, Cried the Phoenix*. The play is significant because it gives us the central fact we must have to understand Williams' work, the nature of his literary parentage. In art, a son must seek out a father who will give him what he needs. Williams needed a rationale for the sexual obsessions that dominate his work, and it was this that Lawrence seemed to give him. In the Preface to *I Rise in Flame* Williams wrote, "Lawrence felt the mystery and power of sex, as the primal life urge, and was the lifelong adversary of those who wanted to keep the subject locked away in the cellars of prudery," and in the play he makes Frieda exclaim, "You just don't know. The meaning of Lawrence escapes you. In all of his work he celebrates the body."

Whether or not Williams assesses Lawrence correctly is, for an understanding of Williams' own work, irrelevant. The important thing is that from a very early point

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in his career (*I Rise in Flame* dates from 1941) Williams saw Lawrence as the great writer who "celebrates the body" and apparently saw himself as that writer's disciple. Like many disciples, however, Williams introduced his own variations on the master's doctrine. Williams betrayed Lawrence primarily by extending the approval of Lawrentian doctrine to areas of sexual experience beyond the normal, but first he did so by basing a very bad play on one of Lawrence's short stories.

The play, called *You Touched Me* from Lawrence's story of that title, is an early work, copyrighted in 1942. Although it shows little of the doctrinal variation on which Williams' later work is based, the distortions that were introduced as the story was transformed into a play are highly revealing. In addition, *You Touched Me* is important for establishing the structural pattern of two of Williams' most attractive plays, *The Glass Menagerie* and *The Rose Tattoo.*

Lawrence's story concerns the marriage between Matilda, the daughter of a retired pottery manufacturer, and his adopted son, Hadrian. Although the marriage is brought about by the father's threatening to leave his daughters penniless, it is a good marriage that rescues Matilda from her empty life and eases the spirit of the old man who, at the end of the story, asks the newlyweds to kiss and murmurs as they do so, "That's right! That's right!"

Williams' play, which he wrote in collaboration with Donald Windham, is a stunning vulgarization of Lawrence's story. The younger sister, Emmie, is changed into a frigid maiden aunt who represents, in Williams' words, "aggressive sterility." Matilda herself, a thin, large-nosed woman of thirty-two, turns into a pale girl of twenty, the cliché of the frail, sheltered maiden. Hadrian, in the story a neat, scheming little soldier with a common-looking mustache, is transformed into "a clean-cut, muscular young man in the dress uniform of a lieutenant in the Royal Canadian Air Force," much given to speeches about faith, the glories of the future, and the conquering of new countries of the mind. And the elderly pottery manufacturer is turned into a spry, if alcoholic, old sea captain, portrayed on the stage by Edmund Gwenn, everyone's lovable old grandfather. Given this set of popular-magazine characters, the play has no trouble reaching its predictable conclusion as the captain helps the handsome airman defeat the aunt and win the shy Matilda.

What is important here is not that, working with unfamiliar material at this early stage in his career, Williams should write a poor play, but that, while retaining the essential Lawrentian theme, he should so alter Lawrence's material as to produce an unmistakable Tennessee Williams play. The light but subtle characterizations around which Lawrence built his story are in the play coarsened to the point where the characters are as obviously broken down into the bad guys and the good guys as those in any television western; Hadrian, Matilda and the captain are in favor of sexuality while the frigid Emmie and her suitor, an impotent clergyman, are opposed to it. Williams is not a psychologist, and he "understands" his characters very little; rather, he is a moralist, although a very special one, and he judges them.

Although Williams has distorted Lawrence's work by sentimentalizing it and by introducing into it caricatures of frigidity and impotence, he is genuinely sympathetic to its real theme, the awakening of life, and particularly sexual life, in one who had previously been dead to it. In both the play and the story, Hadrian (the conquering emperor from the warm South) defeats the forces of sterility and rouses Matilda to new life. It was this action, which Williams sees as profoundly good, that he developed in this early play and then made the center of two of his most pleasing works.

Both *The Glass Menagerie* and *The Rose Tattoo* are variations on the material first used in *You Touched Me.* In each play the central character, a woman who has retired from life, lives in a closed world that excludes sexuality, "the primal life urge." Into this world comes a man, like Hadrian

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the sexual force designed to release the woman from her bondage. But although he succeeds in one case, in the other he fails. The reasons for this difference are worth noting.

The figure of Laura in *The Glass Menagerie* has clearly been developed from that of Matilda of *You Touched Me,* who is described by Williams as having "the delicate, almost transparent quality of glass." Both are shy, fragile creatures, remote from the life around them. But where Hadrian awakens Matilda and brings her back to life, Laura's gentleman caller gives her only a momentary glimpse of normal life before she drifts back into the fantasy world of glass animals. In Williams' moral system the rejection of life is the greatest crime, and those guilty of it are visited by the kind of punishment that falls upon Blanche DuBois in *Streetcar* and Sebastian Venable in *Suddenly Last Summer.* Laura, however, is innocent; she does not reject but rather is rejected, not because of her limp, which does not exist in "Portrait of a Girl in Glass," Williams' own short story upon which he based his play, but because she is the sensitive, misunderstood exile, a recurrent character in Williams' work, one of the fugitive kind, who are too fragile to live in a malignant world.

The vigorous Serafina Delle Rose of *The Rose Tattoo,* however, openly rejects life after the death of her husband. She lives an existence as solitary and sterile as that of Laura among the glass animals. Only when the truck driver Alvaro Mangiacavallo, who has the face of a clown but the body of her husband, appears does she disclaim her rejection and return to the world of life and sexuality. Again it was to this favorite theme that Williams turned when he converted his one-acter *27 Wagons Full of Cotton* into the script for the film *Baby Doll.* The vengeful sadist Vicarro becomes in the film the Lawrentian lover Vacarro who awakens the virginal heroine to sexual life.

Period of Adjustment, perhaps Williams' worst play, seems to belong to this group of gentle plays, for at its conclusion the two couples achieve sexual harmony as the phallically named community of High Point sinks further into the cavern beneath it. But before the playwright allows this to happen, each of the two men who are its central figures is humiliated and forced to admit his weakness. They have been great fighters and war heroes, but one has abased himself to marry for money, and before he can be forgiven he must be bullied by his father-in-law and forced to accept his unattractive wife. The other has rejected his homosexual nature, or at least pretended to a virility he does not possess. He must publicly admit his weakness before he is bedded down, blissfully it is assumed, with his hysterical bride. The play falls apart because Williams cannot decide whether his central figures are to be forgiven or to be punished.

When Williams does not doubt that a character who has transgressed his moral code must be punished, his work is at its most powerful. Of all the crimes in this code the greatest is that from which Matilda and Serafina are preserved, the rejection of life. This theme of punishment for an act of rejection is at the center of a group of Williams' plays very different from that already examined, but it is expressed most explicitly in a short story, "Desire and the Black Masseur," from the volume *One Arm and Other Stories.* The central character, Walter Burns, a man who has yielded completely to the loveless, conventional life surrounding him, is haunted by a nameless, unfulfilled desire which is finally satisfied by a giant Negro masseur in a Turkish bath. Under the manipulations of the masseur, Burns discovers that his desire has been masochistic, and gradually the masseur, the instrument of his destiny, beats him almost to death. As the story veers toward fantasy, they go to the masseur's room where he kills Burns and proceeds to eat him in the atmosphere of a sacred ritual.

Although this story is bizarre and perhaps a little ridiculous, it says a great deal that is revealing of the cast of mind of its author. To him, Walter Burns is not an individual but a broad symbol of human

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guilt, for Williams believes that the sins of the world "are really only its partialities, its incompletions, and these are what sufferings must atone for." He sees these sufferings as ritual, a device for removing guilt. This is the function of "the principle of atonement, the surrender of the self to violent treatment by others with the idea of thereby clearing one's self of his guilt." For all its macabre elements, in the mind of its author, as the end of the story shows, "Desire and the Black Masseur" is an example of a wider vision comprehending the world and the place of suffering in it. "And meantime," Williams concludes, "slowly, with barely a thought of so doing, the earth's whole population twisted and writhed beneath the manipulation of night's black fingers, the white ones of day with skeletons splintered and flesh reduced to pulp, as out of this unlikely problem, the answer, perfection, was slowly evolved through torture."

We need not believe that anything like perfection could be evolved from the process described in "Desire and the Black Masseur" to see its significance in relation to Williams' major work. The story concerns an elaborate, ritual punishment of one who has rejected life, and, more specifically, rejected sexuality. A whole group of Williams' plays including some of his most remarkable—*A Streetcar Named Desire, Summer and Smoke, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Suddenly Last Summer*—is centered on this idea of the terrible punishment that is visited on one because of an act of sexual rejection.

The stage action of *A Streetcar Named Desire,* still Williams' finest play, consists almost entirely of the punishment that its heroine, Blanche DuBois, endures as atonement for her act of rejection, her sin in terms of Williams' morality. Since Williams begins the action of his play at a late point in his story, the act itself is not played out on stage but only referred to. Not realizing that she is describing the crime that condemns her, Blanche tells Mitch of her discovery that her adored young husband was a homosexual and of the consequences of her disgust and revulsion:

> BLANCHE. . . . He'd stuck the revolver into his mouth, and fired—so that the back of his head had been—blown away! (She sways and covers her face.) It was because—on the dance floor—unable to stop myself—I'd suddenly said—"I saw! I know! You disgust me . . ." And then the searchlight which had been turned on the world was turned off again and never for one moment since has there been any light that's stronger than this—kitchen—candle. . .

While Blanche delivers this speech and the ones surrounding it, the polka to which she and her husband had danced, the Varsouviana, sounds in the background. At the end of the play, when Blanche sees the doctor who is to lead her off to the asylum, her punishment is complete and the Varsouviana sounds again, linking her crime to its retribution. As Blanche flees from the doctor, "the Varsouviana is filtered into a weird distortion accompanied by the cries and noises of the jungle." These symbolize simultaneously Blanche's chaotic state and the instrument of her destruction, Stanley Kowalski, the complete sensual animal, the equivalent in function to the black masseur.

Although Kowalski's primary function, to destroy Blanche, is clear, there are certain ambiguities evoked by his role. By becoming Blanche's destroyer, Kowalski also becomes the avenger of her homosexual husband. Although he is Williams' melodramatic exaggeration of the Lawrentian lover, the embodiment of admired male sexuality, it is appropriate from Williams' point of view that Kowalski should to some degree be identified with the lonely homosexual who had been driven to suicide, for Williams saw Lawrence not only as the propagandist of sexual vitality but as the symbol of the solitary, rejected exile. (See the poem called "Cried the Fox" from Williams' collection, *In the Winter of Cities.* In it Lawrence is symbolized as the fox pursued by the cruel hounds.) By implication, then, Williams has extended Lawrentian approval to the rejected homosexual (an act that probably set Lawrence spinning in his grave). Yet this approval is never wholehearted; for the exile homosexual, as he appears in Williams' work, is always tormented and often despairing. He cannot,

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after all, be a martyr until Williams has had him crucified.

Those who crucify, however, can never be guiltless. Kowalski, although an avenger, is as guilty of crucifying Blanche as she is of crucifying her husband. For Blanche, who has lost the plantation Belle Reve, the beautiful dream of a life of gracious gentility, is an exile like the homosexual; her tormentor, the apelike Kowalski, from one point of view the representative of Lawrentian vitality, is from another the brutal, male torturer of a lonely spirit. But however compassionately Blanche is viewed, she remains a woman who, in effect, has killed her husband by her cruelty, and her attempts to turn away from death to its opposite—"the opposite is desire," as Blanche herself says—are fruitless. Even as she tells Mitch about her promiscuity, a Mexican woman stands at one side of the stage selling flowers for the dead. *"Flores para los muertos,"* she calls, *"flores—flores."*

A variant on the act of rejection is performed in Scene Six of *Summer and Smoke.* The characters are similar to those already encountered: the frail, spinsterish Southern girl with her sensuality repressed by a puritanical background; the man who is seeking spiritual relief through a sexual union. Like many of Williams' characters he needs love as relief from solitude. At one point, while giving Alma an ironic anatomy lecture, he shouts, "This part down here is the sex—which is hungry for love because it is sometimes lonesome." At the crucial moment she rejects his advances and rushes off. Although Alma, like Blanche, has sinned and must atone, she has not sinned out of cruelty nor has she caused the death of her lover. After he has passed through his spiritual crisis and found a wife and a place in the world, Alma realizes what she had done. Like Blanche she is condemned to be tormented by the urges she had turned away from, and like Blanche she turns to promiscuity, but because her sin has been somewhat mitigated by her realization of it there is a suggestion at the end of the play that the traveling salesman she has picked up may lead her to salvation rather than destruction.

Williams' most recent play, *The Night of the Iguana* (a reworking of his short story of the same title), has, like *Summer and Smoke,* affinities with both the severity of *Streetcar* and the gentleness of *The Glass Menagerie.* Its heroine, Hannah Jelkes, a New England spinster artist, is placed in a position that closely parallels that of Blanche DuBois. But unlike Blanche, when confronted by an appeal for help from one with abnormal sexual inclinations (a homosexual in the original story, but converted for stage purposes to an unfrocked minister with a taste for pubescent girls), instead of driving him to suicide, she offers him what help she can. That help, however, is limited. When he asks to be allowed to travel with her, she cannot accept him. Because like Laura and Alma she is too delicate and too repressed to take on a full emotional relationship, Shannon's rescue is finally left to the sexually vital hotel proprietor, while Hannah must continue in loveless solitude. By her sympathy for Shannon and for the pathetic fetishist she had previously aided, she has earned, however, a fate far gentler than the breakdown meted out to Blanche and to her own predecessor in the original story.

In *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,* however, Williams produces something much nearer the pattern of *Streetcar.* In fact, from one point of view *Cat* is simply a reworking of the materials of the earlier play, but with a crucial change that made it almost impossible for Williams to bring his play to a reasonable conclusion. Again we are presented with a work in which the motivating figure does not appear, and again that figure is the rejected homosexual. But now because the rejector, the sinner who must atone, is not a woman but a man, certain problems arise. The audience, although it sympathizes with Blanche, can accept her as guilty. She is a woman, and had she been able to give her husband love instead of contempt, she might have led him back to a normal life. Brick, however, confronted with Skipper's telephoned confession of a homosexual attachment, is hardly in a position to do the same—short of admitting a similar inclination. Yet Williams, although he is ambiguous about sev-

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eral points in this play, is not ambiguous about Brick's guilt. Big Daddy himself, who despises mendacity, condemns his son. "You! dug the grave of your friend," he cries, "and kicked him in it!—before you'd face the truth with him!" But it is beyond Big Daddy's power to explain how Brick was to do so.

Yet in a play designed for the modern professional theater, Williams cannot openly punish Brick for failing to be an honest homosexual. When he showed *Cat* to the representative of that theater, Elia Kazan, and Kazan suggested certain changes, Williams accepted his advice. As a result, the comparatively optimistic third act performed on Broadway contains the shift in Brick's character that leads to the suggestion that his castration, symbolized obviously enough by his broken ankle, will not be permanent. In the published version of the play, in which the Broadway third act is printed as a kind of addendum to the original, Williams claimed that he had agreed to Kazan's suggestions to retain his interest. There is no reason to disbelieve this statement, but it is worth noting that by mitigating Brick's punishment, Williams was relieved of the necessity of asking his audience to agree that Brick deserved to be castrated for an act which most members of that audience would not consider to be a crime.

Although the tentativeness of Williams' condemnation of Brick makes it difficult to know whether Brick was so condemned for rejecting his homosexual friend or for rejecting his own homosexual nature, in *Cat,* at least, homosexuality itself carries no stigma. In contrast to the castrated Brick, who has rejected, stands Big Daddy, who has accepted. Although he is a man of almost ostentatious virility, as well as the most powerful and sympathetic figure in the play, he had served and respected the two idyllically conceived homosexuals, Straw and Ochello, and received his land from them as a kind of benediction. Yet in *Suddenly Last Summer,* the last play to date of what may be called the "punishment" group, Williams has produced a work in which the homosexual—so often for him the symbol of the lonely, rejected exile—becomes the rejector, the sinner who must be punished.

But neither this shift in Williams' usual pattern nor the *bizarrerie* of the play's atmosphere should conceal the fact that *Suddenly Last Summer* follows closely the structure of the other plays in this group. Once more the pivotal figure, the exile homosexual, has met a violent death before the opening of the play. As the sterile Brick is contrasted with Big Daddy, the life-giving father of *Cat,* so the cruel Sebastian is played off against the loving and merciful Catharine who gives herself not, it seems, out of desire but as an act of rescue. "We walked through the wet grass to the great misty oaks," she says, "as if somebody was calling us for help there." If we remember that this act of rescue is exactly what Blanche, Alma and Brick failed to perform, we realize that Williams means us to accept Catharine as entirely good. Although Sebastian is, as we expect him to be, the loveless rejector who is punished for his sins, there is a surprising similarity between his vision of a world dominated by remorseless cruelty—as expressed in the description of the Encantadas, the Galápagos Islands, where baby sea turtles are killed and devoured by carnivorous birds of prey—and the vision of a world undergoing perpetual punishment expressed in "Desire and the Black Masseur." However, in punishing Sebastian, Williams is not disclaiming this vision. Sebastian's sin lay not in perceiving the world as, for Williams, it is, but in his believing, with a pride bordering on *hubris,* that he could exalt himself above his kind, that he could feed upon people like one of the devouring birds of the Encantadas. As always in Williams, the punishment monstrously fits the crime. As Sebastian had cruelly watched the turtles being eaten, as he had fed the fruit flies to the devouring plant, so he is fed to the band of children whom he has perverted and is devoured by them.

Sebastian's crime then is the very one committed by Blanche, Alma and Brick. He

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has turned away from his suffering fellow creatures and, instead of offering love, has offered hate. He has not understood, as Catharine has, that although all men may be on a stricken ship sinking into the sea, "that's no reason for everyone drowning for hating everyone drowning." And yet there is a difficulty for the spectator in accepting the nature of Sebastian's punishment, however fierce he knows Williams' morality to be. It is not merely that Sebastian's fate is so violently grotesque but that, unlike Blanche and Brick, he has not performed a specific act that brings his punishment upon him; he is punished for what he is rather than for what he does. He is not only a rejector but also a homosexual, always in Williams' work an object simultaneously of sympathy and of revulsion. The ambiguity already noted in *Streetcar* appears in all Williams' plays that touch on homosexuality. There is an intimate connection between the guilty rejector and the martyred homosexual; the punishment visited on the former regularly echoes the fate of the latter, so that the two characters are not always distinguishable. In *Streetcar* the rejector and the homosexual victim were separate, but both met desperate ends. In the ambiguous Brick these figures began to converge, and in *Suddenly Last Summer* they have completely coalesced. The pain felt by the cruel rejector is also felt by the sterile and guilty homosexual; neither can escape corruption and despair.

Here lies the source of that vision of universal corruption that pervades so much of Williams' work and that makes it at once so violent and so pathetic. In a world dominated by cruelty, Williams maintains, the innocent are not only destroyed; eventually they too are corrupted. Williams has produced three plays centered on this theme and on the figure that embodies it, the wandering innocent. *Camino Real, Orpheus Descending* and *Sweet Bird of Youth* all tell the story of a wanderer who is or has been innocent, who comes into the world of universal corruption and who is thereupon destroyed by it.

Williams has said flatly that the sinister fantasy world of the Camino Real "is nothing more nor less than my conception of the time and world that I live in." It is a time in which greed and brutality are the ruling forces and a world in which those pathetic souls who attempt to show some affection for their fellow creatures are remorselessly crushed and then thrown into a barrel and carted away by the street cleaners. Although this is admittedly a nightmare world, it does not differ in any essential way from the American South as it appears in *Orpheus Descending* and *Sweet Bird of Youth*. This too is a nightmare world where greed, brutality and sterility rule and where those who love are castrated or burned alive. In these last two plays, Williams has attempted to give this world some resemblance to a recognizable social reality, but this reality is always closer to the mysterious country of the Camino Real than to anything in the southern United States. As an epigraph to *Camino Real* Williams has selected the opening lines of Dante's *Inferno;* the setting of that play is the place to which Orpheus descended, hell.

As we would expect, the ruler of hell is Death; more specifically, he is the god of sterility. In *Camino Real,* Gutman, the proprietor of the Siete Mares hotel, is cruel and sinister enough, but he always remains a little remote from the action. Had Williams personified the evil of the place in a single powerful figure, he might have been less able to end the play with its suggestion (however unconvincing) of optimism. Like Gutman, Jabe Torrance, the proprietor of the mercantile store in *Orpheus Descending,* takes little direct part in the action, but he is a far more heavily drawn figure and a far more violent antagonist. The evil creature who destroys life wherever he can find it is, as Williams describes him in a stage direction, "death's self and malignancy." He is not only "death's self," but the personification of sterility and impotence. Nurse Porter, who seems to have supernatural perception, can tell at a glance that Lady is pregnant and that Jabe is not the father. As he had burned the wine gar-

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den of Lady's father where the fig tree blossomed and true lovers met, so he calls upon the fires of the hell of impotence to burn her and her lover. (It should be noted that while Williams' work has changed in tone from the gentleness of *You Touched Me,* where the impotent clergyman was a figure of fun, it has not shifted in point of view.) Even more heavily than Jabe, however, Boss Finley of *Sweet Bird of Youth* is drawn as the symbol of malignant impotence. Miss Lucy, his mistress, has scrawled in lipstick across the ladies' room mirror, "Boss Finley is too old to cut the mustard." By implication, at least, he had presided over the castration of an innocent Negro and, as the play ends, is about to preside over that of its hero, Chance Wayne. (The anti-Negro social elements, like the Nazis of *The Night of the Iguana* who are also irrelevant to the drama, are no more than a ploy, a device to win for the hero the sympathy of a liberal New York audience.) The best description of Boss Finley is not in the play but in a poem called "Old Men with Sticks" found in *In the Winter of Cities.* In the poem, senile old men with sticks (lifeless phalli) clump about on "the iron earth of winter."

> Drawn from the pouch that hangs
> Like a withered testicle at the belted waist,
> pearles without luster are passed without passion amongst them;
> the dim but enduring stones of hatred
> are trafficked amongst them by stealth.

As a result, "youth from his lover/draws apart in shame," and frost covers the land.

When Boss Finley's impotence is contrasted with Chance's attitude toward the emasculation of the Negro, the natures of the opposing forces in the play become clear. "You know what that is, don't you?" Chance cries. "Sex-envy is what that is, and the revenge for sex-envy which is a widespread disease that I have run into personally too often for me to doubt its existence or any manifestation." Boss Finley, Chance says, "was just called down from the hills to preach hate. I was born here to make love." Each of the three wanderers, Kilroy, Val and Chance, had been born to make love, but each has been wounded by a hostile world. Kilroy's heart condition prevents him from continuing as a prizefighter or from staying with his "real true woman." Of the three he is the only true innocent and, significantly, the only one who is alone. Val and Chance both speak of the corrupt lives they have lived and of the waning of their youths, but in reality they are bound not by time or by their past lives but by their relationships with an older woman.

Williams developed this relationship most elaborately in his novella, *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone.* In that book a once beautiful actress, who had married lovelessly "to escape copulation," finds herself an aging widow at the end of her career and is reduced to buying sexuality from the lowest and most sinister of gigolos. What is most striking here is not the recognizable punishment-for-rejection pattern but the fact that Mrs. Stone's real inclinations are toward lesbianism. Her most vivid sexual experience had been an abortive moment with a schoolgirl friend. In addition, during a brief affair with a young actor, she had enveloped him in an embrace "in a manner that was more like a man's with a girl, and to which he submitted in a way that also suggested a reversal of gender."

If the suggestion of homosexuality that underlies the relationship between the older woman and the younger man in *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* is extended to *Orpheus* and *Sweet Bird* (in each case the ostensible woman is an older person having a forbidden affair with a beautiful young man), these works fit very easily into the pattern of ambiguity we have observed in the "punishment" group. From one point of view we have the wandering love-giver—Val, whose phallic guitar is an obvious symbol, and Chance, who has a speech about his vocation as a love-maker for the middle-aged, the ugly, the sad and the "eccentric"—who enters the nightmare world of Hades in *Orpheus* and of what the Princess in *Sweet Bird* calls "the ogre's

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country at the top of the beanstalk, the country of the flesh-hungry, blood-thirsty ogre." There he attempts to rescue a lover, and in the attempt he is brutally destroyed by the giant.

From another point of view, however, the wanderer is not innocent but corrupt. Beneath the apparent heterosexual relationship lies one that is homosexual, and from it spreads an aura of corruption that pervades the plays. Chance calculates his age by the level of rot in him, and Val, who has been "on a party" in the bars of New Orleans since he was fifteen, is trying vainly to flee from his past. In his poem called "Orpheus Descending," Williams writes, "Now Orpheus, crawl, O shamefaced fugitive, crawl back under the crumbling broken wall of yourself." As before, the seeming-innocent is himself guilty and must be hideously punished. Once his moral sense has been appeased, however, Williams can allow himself the luxury of a sentimental apotheosis. *Orpheus* and *Sweet Bird* take place at Easter, and in both plays there is a suggestion that the dead wanderer should be viewed as a martyred Christ figure whose spirit is resurrected in Carol Cutrere and the Princess. (However, where the suggestion of resurrection is not incredible in *Orpheus,* the idea that the pathetic gigolo of *Sweet Bird* could be a Christlike martyr is merely bizarre.) It is the wanderer's sin that brings him to destruction and only after he has been punished and destroyed can he be revered.

It is from this conflict between the need to condemn and the desire to pardon that the weakness of Williams' work stems, for it is ironically the strength of his moral temper that forces him to censure what he wishes to exalt. Williams is passionately committed to the great Romantic dictum inherent in his neo-Lawrentian point of view, that the natural equals the good, that the great natural instincts that well up out of the subconscious depths of men—and particularly the sexual instinct, whatever form it may take—are to be trusted absolutely. But Williams is too strong a moralist, far too permeated with a sense of sin, to be able to accept such an idea with equanimity. However pathetic he may make the martyred homosexual, however seemingly innocent the wandering love-giver, the moral strength that led Williams to punish the guilty Blanche impels him to condemn Brick and Chance. But because he is condemning what he most desires to pardon, he must sometimes, in order to condemn at all, do so with ferocious violence.

When the conflicts among Williams' sympathies are at a minimum, when his morality is clearly focused and has some recognizable relation to one that most men find intelligible, as in *Streetcar,* he is at his best. When, however, his mind is confused, when we cannot tell whether the central figures of his plays are innocent or guilty, as in *Cat,* or when we are asked to believe that the obviously guilty have in some mysterious way retained their innocence, as in *Sweet Bird,* our credulity is strained, and the desperation of the most powerful moral playwright of our time becomes painfully visible.

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The Math Wars

BENJAMIN DEMOTT

The issues in the dispute seemed at first glance impenetrable, but the sequence of events that brought them public notice was easy to trace. In October, 1961, the New York University *Alumni News* carried an article by a faculty member abusing proposals for the improvement of secondary school mathematics teaching that had recently been put forward by three major professional groups of mathematicians. The article, several thousand words long, was given a front-page play beneath the headline, MATH TEACHING REFORMS ASSAILED AS PERIL TO U. S. SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS; it was picked up by alert education editors and wire services; within days the *Alumni News* was reprinting it in batches of 1500 in an attempt to keep up with requests for copies that poured in from parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, professors and college administrators everywhere in the country. (The superintendent of schools at Lindenhurst, Long Island, asked for twenty copies, one for each member of his mathematics department; the Rutgers Graduate School of Education distributed 150 copies; a professor at the University of Pennsylvania ordered sixty copies, announcing that he meant to send one to every school superintendent in suburban Philadelphia.)

A counterattack was quickly launched by the abused organizations. Individual leaders of the three groups, including professors at Stanford and at the Universities of Chicago, Minnesota and Kansas, wrote strong letters of self-justification that appeared in the metropolitan dailies as well as in a later issue of the *Alumni News*. The parent professional body, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, released for national circulation a ninety-page account of the more important ventures in the "improved mathematics" field—and this pamphlet itself became the subject of bewildered wire service dispatches. By the end of the year confusion had mounted so high that mathematicians were under pressure to gather themselves for the labor of public clarification. "It's getting so that the layman no longer knows what expert to listen to," said the *Newsletter* of Admiral Rickover's Council for Basic Education. And other organizations joined this one in calling for a "calm discussion of the issues, couched in non-technical terms and addressed to the general public as well as to school people."

The likelihood that the call would quickly be heeded appeared slight. For one reason, too much intemperate language was shed by the principals of the dispute to permit a docile retreat into mannerly talk. (Professor Morris Kline, the author of the *Alumni News* article that roused the original furies, described aspects of the improved mathematics programs as "wholly misguided," "sheer nonsense," attempts to replace the "fruitful and rich essence of mathematics" with "sterile, peripheral, pedantic details." And Professor E. G. Begle of Stanford, one of the mathematicians who responded to this attack, accused Kline of

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laying down an indictment without supporting evidence, and ended an angry letter with the inelegant remark that it was "time for Prof. Kline to either 'put up' or 'shut up.'") For another, the teachers and professional mathematicians involved in the programs under abuse obviously regarded themselves as unselfish patriots, men who willingly interrupted their careers for an enterprise in public service and hence had some right to immunity from criticism that appeared to disparage their motives. And for still another the dispute in question was not really of recent birth: it had begun exacerbating feelings in professional circles years ago, with the result that certain lines of division had already hardened in a manner inimical to calm or friendly discussion.

To say this is not to imply that well-defined antireform factions exist at this moment within the groves of academic mathematicians. Professor Kline stands as the spokesman for hosts of doubters—superintendents, parents and others—but no professional group as yet has endorsed his views. Indeed, professionals in his field seem strikingly unified in their support of projects of teaching reform. The Commission on Mathematics of the College Entrance Examination Board and the Secondary School Curriculum Committee of the National Council have worked together from the inception of the movement. At least six projects of improved mathematics are already in full tide, publishing new textbooks, retraining high school teachers, educating civic organizations on procedures for instituting curriculum reforms in their local school systems. (Among the most active groups are the University of Illinois Committee on School Mathematics, the University of Maryland Mathematics Project, the Ball State, Indiana State Teachers College Experimental Mathematics Program and the Boston College Mathematics Institute.) Improved mathematics programs have been sponsored by state offices of education—witness the Minnesota Laboratory for the Improvement of Secondary School Mathematics. And the Federal Government itself, acting through the National Science Foundation, has contributed over four million dollars to the School Mathematics Study Group (S.M.S.G.), which already has drawn on the labors of hundreds of school and university mathematicians in devising its new curriculum.

Since S.M.S.G. ranks as the largest united effort for improvement in the history of mathematics education, it has borne the brunt of Professor Kline's attack. The project is now four years old. It had its origins in the spring of 1958, when the president of the American Mathematical Society appointed a committee to seek methods of improving the teaching of high school mathematics. The head of the committee was the author of the "put up or shut up" letter just mentioned—Professor Begle, then of Yale, now of Stanford. His group had the guidance of an advisory council composed of college and university mathematicians, high school teachers, experts in education and representatives of science and technology; and, as already indicated, it had the financial support of the National Science Foundation. The Committee's initial decision was that the weakness of mathematics teaching in high schools was at least partly attributable to the tendency of the mathematics classroom to focus on mere mechanical manipulation of numbers in accordance with rote-learned rules, instead of upon studies that induced a conception of the meaning of the rules and the manipulations. It was convinced that twentieth-century advances in mathematics had not only clarified the *nature* of mathematical knowledge, but had produced ideas that could be introduced into secondary school education for the purpose of effecting the desiderated shift in focus. And it assumed that the best way to insure the orderly introduction of these ideas was to create a series of texts for a complete six-year mathematics course in junior and senior high school.

Accordingly, the Committee set itself the task of producing the required texts. It assembled a staff of about a hundred university mathematicians and the same number of high school teachers; the staff was divided into writing teams (composed equally of high school and university teachers); within

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a year the first texts and teachers' manuals were completed. These were put into use in the school year 1959-1960 by 400 teachers instructing 42,000 pupils in forty-five states. (They are in much wider use now.) The secondary school teachers in the experiment were guided by consultation with university mathematicians—sometimes by "in-service courses" given in the high schools themselves. The textbooks were evaluated through analysis of questionnaires concerning them that were answered by teachers, pupils and outside advisers; they were then extensively revised by a staff of a hundred practicing teachers organized into revision teams, and thereafter put on the market at cost by Yale University Press. The latter has also made available an accompanying series of so-called "enrichment pamphlets"—attractively written surveys of special subjects in mathematics designed to encourage gifted students into deeper explorations of the topics treated in their current S.M.S.G. texts. (These pamphlets are comparable in purpose, although not in content, to the series of Russian texts recently brought out in translation here by a division of Random House: six books treating topics of interest in the history of mathematics that are offered to talented Soviet secondary school students as supplements to their regular textbooks.)

The timetable thus described, which suggests that the S.M.S.G. texts were hastily produced and tested (Professor Kline himself has made this charge), is to a degree misleading. Although the organizing committee of S.M.S.G. was formed only in the spring of 1958, discussion of ways of improving mathematics teaching was well-advanced by that time. The Carnegie Corporation and the University of Illinois, for example, had been jointly supporting a Curriculum Study in Mathematics since 1952; the Study had produced a number of texts emphasizing (as those of S.M.S.G. were to do) the structure of mathematics and the "discovery theory" of learning; these texts had been tested in several states before the S.M.S.G. project was undertaken. By 1957 the Commission on Mathematics had circulated to secondary schools and universities thousands of copies of a detailed series of recommendations for teaching reform. Discussion of these recommendations, including presentation of papers surveying them at learned society meetings and public debates on their merits at various state universities, had been fully reported to the profession as a whole by the spring of 1958, when the N.S.F. agreed to support a comprehensive national program of reform. Indeed, Professor Kline himself was in print with an attack on the theories of the reformers as early as October, 1958, before any S.M.S.G. textbook had been completed. Although in the last four years he has written often in opposition to "the modernists," as he calls them, he acknowledged a few months ago that their assumptions were familiar enough in 1958 for him to write an article about them at that time that in substance is still his position. There is, in short, some reason for hesitating to accept this critic's recent complaints about "helter-skelter" preparation, or his ironic observation that "apparently one year of experimentation, and a revision executed as hastily as the original, sufficed to determine the ideal curriculum for an entire nation."

These complaints, however, are by no means central to the case that Professor Kline has made against the curriculum in question. That case is built on a rejection of four key assumptions of the reformers. The first, as Professor Kline represents it, is that a revolution in mathematics has occurred in the last sixty years that has rendered obsolete the mathematics that is now being taught in secondary schools. Professor Kline scoffs at this assumption, arguing that the revolution is largely a fiction, that "if there is one subject in which up-to-dateness is totally irrelevant, it is mathematics," and that the reformers disprove their own contention that the mathematics of the past is outmoded by including a large measure of it in their new texts. The second assumption of the reformers that Professor Kline rejects is that the new topics to be included in the secondary school curriculum—symbolic logic, Boolean algebra, set theory, groups and fields, postulational systems and statistics—are of vital importance partly be-

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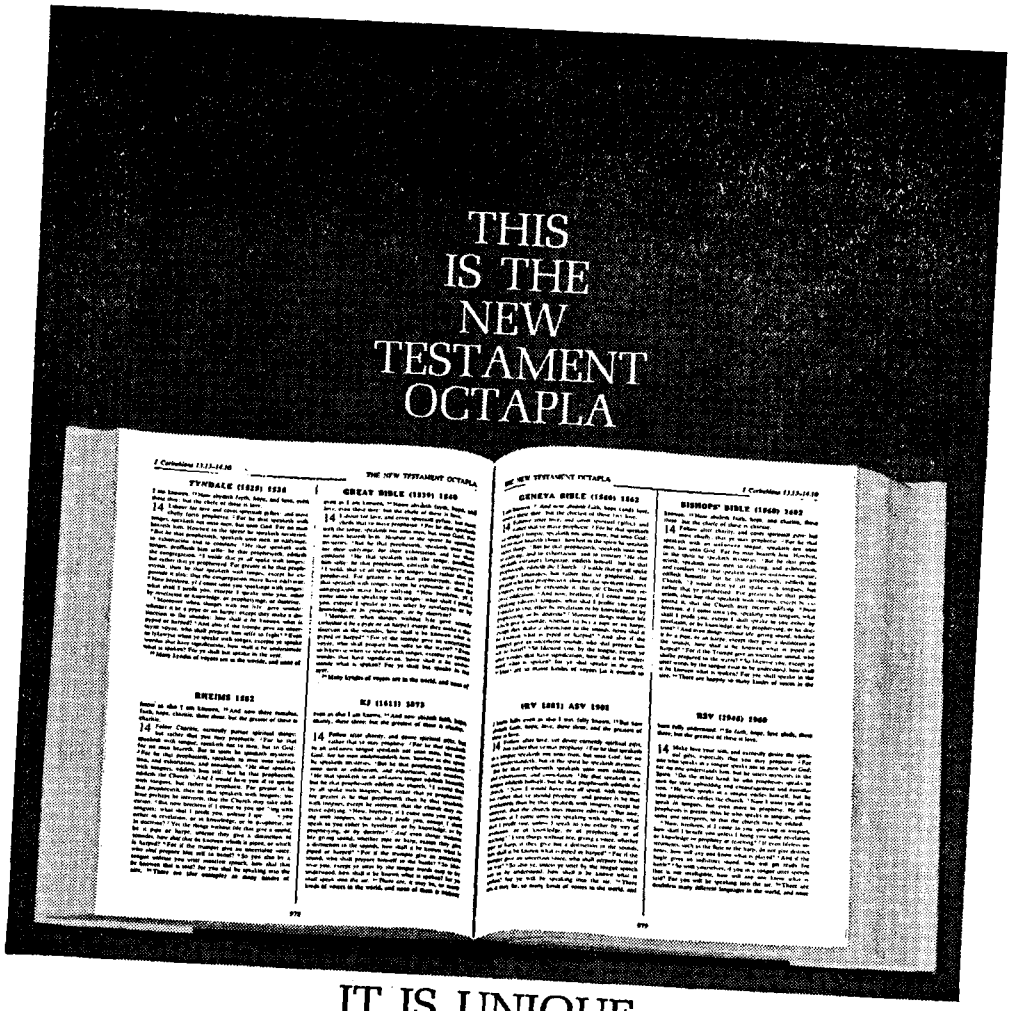

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cause of their practical applications, partly because of their power to illuminate standard mathematical topics. Professor Kline's answer to this point is that "one could not pick [material] more peripheral" to "the body of mathematics" than the new topics, and in any case these topics are almost bare of applications in science—"practically useless." The third assumption of the reformers is that, quite aside from their practical reference, the new topics are of especial use in helping teachers to present standard material from a unified point of view. Professor Kline dismisses this claim with the remark that a student might well come to an understanding of "unity," might fathom (say) all the operations, properties and laws of a field, and still be unable to "add 2 and 2"—much less fractions, irrationals or complex numbers. And the fourth assumption of the reformers (once again, as Professor Kline represents it) is that the best way to arouse interest in mathematical ideas is to develop a student's instinct for abstraction. Professor Kline counters this claim by offering his own pedagogical philosophy. Its chief article is that student interest can only be wakened by teachers who constantly emphasize that the primary use of mathematics is "the solution of simple, genuine, and basic physical problems," and who invariably present concepts "intuitively in physical or geometric terms." When abstraction enters, when the teacher cannot demonstrate "applications," when mathematics that can be related to physical phenomena is replaced by "pointless mathematics, a manipulation of meaningless symbols," then (says this critic) the mathematics classroom becomes a place "which can appeal only to an esoteric group."

As might be guessed from the publicity given these arguments, the man who developed them is a professional of substantial qualifications. He is chairman of the Washington Square College (N.Y.U.) mathematics department, and director of electromagnetic research at the University's Institute of Mathematical Sciences; he has spent two years in research at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton; he has held Guggenheim fellowships; he has expressed his hostility to the notion of mathematics as pure abstraction in two recent and interesting books, *Mathematics in Western Culture* and *Mathematics in the Physical World.* What is more, he is a lively writer: noting that the "modernists" justify the teaching of Boolean algebra on the ground that it is used by designers of switching circuits, Professor Kline once observed: "The claim is technically correct, but it justifies teaching Boolean algebra to high school students about as much as the argument that the Presidency of the United States is important because it publicizes the game of golf." Equally important for the future of the reform movement, he is a skillful public debater. According to report he has often bested opponents in debates on the new mathematics held at professional association meetings; it is said, in fact, that the modernists are now engaged in a search—with an eye on the next convention of their tribe—for a man who can match Professor Kline's agility and spontaneity on the platform.

That the cause of "improved mathematics" would be helped if the search succeeded is unquestionable. But it does not follow from this that professional mathematicians stand in serious need of a sage to define for them the fundamental issues in the dispute. A full view of these issues, to be sure, would include many subtleties and qualifications. It is plain that the new mathematical topics are not wholly remote from life. They can even be treated as responses to the technological complexity of modern society—that which replaces the clerk on his stool at his ledger with the electronic digital computer, that which in manufacturing enterprises adds to the familiar calculations of profit and loss the unfamiliar calculations of quality control. It is also plain that twentieth-century mathematics does have applications in the expression and investigation of physical phenomena unheard-of until recently—Lorentz transformations, new series of elementary particles, quanta, nuclei, mass-energy equivalence. And yet those who cite such connections and applications—as for example Professor G. Baley Price of the University of Kansas, who in late 1960 put a lengthy case for the practicality of the

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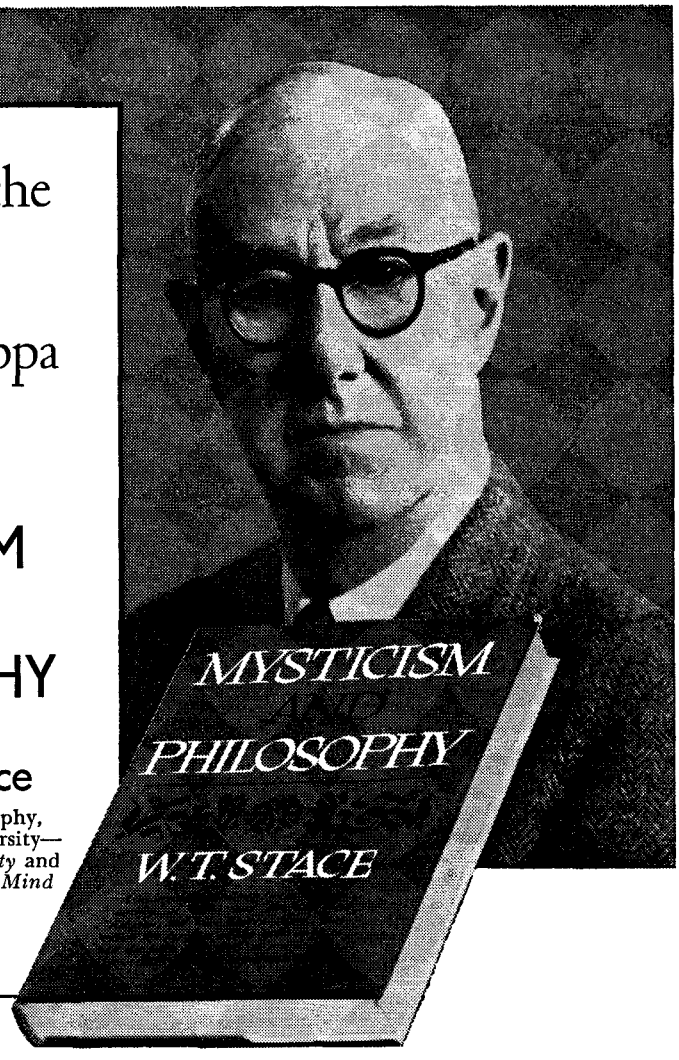

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new mathematics before an N.S.F. Conference—cannot quite persuade their audience to think of Boole as plain brown bread. Professor Kline does have fact on his side when he claims that the major areas of mathematical applications remain those of mechanics, sound, light, radio, electricity and the like, or when he observes that the mathematics required in these fields is largely the old staple stuff, from algebra through the theory of operators, or when he taunts his enemy with the assertion that for every ten people in the world working with applications of Boolean algebra, there are a hundred thousand working in traditional fields. But, to repeat, although there are qualifications to be entered on both sides, the major issues are in no real sense obscure to the trade. Most mathematicians have had enough experience with differences of this kind to recognize that the dispute is at bottom only another version of the old quarrel between the engineering and the scientific mind, between "applied" and theoretical intellects.

And by the same token, turned to the obverse side, no practicing mathematician needs a sage to teach him either that the advance of mathematics has been, historically, toward higher levels of abstraction, or that again and again this seeming movement away from experience paradoxically has led deeper into some portion of reality. Professor Marshall H. Stone of the University of Chicago, a major American mathematical intelligence, undertook recently to state the strongest possible case for abstraction in his field. (The essay in question appeared in the May, 1961, issue of *Liberal Education*.) Opening his argument with the assertion that the twentieth century had in fact created a new mathematical world, he wrote that:

> . . . while several important changes have taken place since 1900 in our conception of mathematics . . . the one which truly involves a revolution in ideas is the discovery that mathematics is entirely independent of the physical world. . . . To put this a little more precisely, mathematics is now seen to have no necessary connection with the physical world beyond the vague and mystifying one implicit in the statement that thinking takes place in the brain. . . . When we stop to compare the mathematics of today with mathematics as it was at the close of the nineteenth century, we may well be amazed to note how rapidly our mathematical knowledge has grown in quantity and complexity, but we should also not fail to observe how closely this development has been involved with an emphasis upon abstraction and an increasing concern with the perception and analysis of broad mathematical patterns. Indeed, upon closer examination we see that this new orientation, made possible only by the divorce of mathematics from its applications, has been the true source of its tremendous growth during the present century.

Professor Stone went on to quote Bertrand Russell's famous epigram, "Mathematics is the subject in which we do not know what we are talking about or whether what we say is true," and he approved it as testifying to the abstract and purely formal nature of mathematical truth. And while he acknowledged that some mathematical systems can serve as "models for portions of reality, thus providing a basis for a theoretical mathematical analysis of relations observed in the phenomenal world," he maintained that this kind of connection between reality and systems is "accidental and to a certain extent arbitrary. . . ."

But even in the essay under discussion Stone hesitated to claim that a "divorce of mathematics from its applications" was absolutely desirable everywhere in the curriculum. He addressed himself directly to differences of opinion "about the antithesis between the concrete and abstract or the related mathematical antithesis between manipulation and pattern-discernment," treating them as especially likely to arise in cooperative teaching ventures involving mathematicians and physical scientists. And he remarked that, "since abstraction and the discernment of patterns are demonstrably playing more important roles in the scientific study of nature—as is very strikingly plain in the case of quantum field theory—the mathematician's desire to emphasize the abstract and the structural aspects of mathematics . . . may today begin to be more sympathetically received than was formerly the case." But, having said

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this, he added forcefully that "the mathematician should not neglect the manipulative aspects of his subject nor insist that his own concern for generality and precision should at all times and in all circumstances be shared by those who engage in making applications of mathematics."

This hesitation—even fence-straddling—may seem surprising: why should a writer end a powerful argument for abstraction as a liberating force with an acknowledgment that awareness of relations between idea and application is at once an obligation and a need? The mystery, however, is more apparent than real. Professional mathematicians know that neither a Kline nor a Stone can attempt to assess his subject, or modes of teaching it, by simple reference to standards that depend upon a dichotomy of idea and application, manipulation and pattern. A tension between these items exists; personal tastes and interests determine individual responses to both; neither can be thought of as something to be "rejected."

And as for the possibility that the reform movement may stand or fall on its ability to turn up an orator who can dramatize the claim that a revolution in mathematics has occurred in the last sixty years: there is little to be said here save that in the history of thought one man's revolution is usually for many years other men's nonsense. In intellectual history revolutions equal states of consciousness. At this moment many sensitive, knowledgeable literary minds are certain that the study of the writings of Freud has nothing whatever to do with the study of Shakespeare, and that a man who allows Freud or Frazer or another intruder from "social science" to corrupt his reading of a poem or play is simply a victim of cant. You cannot *prove* revolutions in any subject; you can only argue that a certain idea ought to have the effect of altering the meaning of the past. Revolutions can be said to have "occurred" only when the meaning of the past has been altered in the common consciousness, only when private intuitions about change have become public assumptions. In the world of mathematics that day has not arrived—and until it does, it will be impossible to measure the worth of a teaching program by considering its adequacy to an "intellectual revolution." *

The truth is, of course, that the one sound test of the improved mathematics movement is whether it offers the student of algebra or geometry or coordinate geometry a more stimulating and exciting vision of his subject than he hitherto has been offered—whether, in short, it can arouse in him that odd sort of infatuation that in intellectual affairs leads to responsible intensities and sober marriages. Judgment on the question must be comparative, and for those who do not live from day to day with mathematics this means hunting up standard mathematics texts and comparing relevant sections of them with the reform movement texts. An unprofessional eye that ventures on a task of this kind begins it in irritation, but it must be said in the present instance that the irritation gives way rapidly to pleasure. The new texts do not wholly eschew techniques leading to intuitive understanding of certain themes—but the themes taught *are* mathematical themes, items that cast light not on pencils and nickels (5×5 means five nickel candy bars cost a quarter), or on the endless neutral intercourse of x and y, but instead on the very ideas of relatedness, multiplicity, intellectual motion itself.

It is not simply that the new texts seem throughout to have abandoned old-line priggishness about admitting that symbols are symbols—although the freedom and playfulness of the acknowledgment is delightful (numbers are names for orderly relations; $5x^2 + 3$ over $5x^2 + 3$ is a name for 1; other names for orderly relations are endless). Neither is it simply that the new texts, as for example the S.M.S.G. first-year algebra book, boldly introduce the notion of the "set" on opening day—so that from the first the student is introduced to the possibility that the models, the numbers and letters he mechanically manipulates, are of

* Professional mathematicians have made several interesting efforts in this line, however. The best of them, a genuinely helpful survey of relations between the new mathematics and the new curriculum, is an essay by Albert E. Meder of Rutgers called "Modern Mathematics and Its Place in the Secondary School" (*The Mathematics Teacher*, October 1957).

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less interest than the ideas that these mechanical operations express.

It is, rather, that the texts everywhere invite the student to understand mathematics as at once an area and a mode of thought—not as a clutch of senseless rules and problems that either do or don't "come out." An ordinary old-line algebra text is likely to begin with flat definitions: "Addition and multiplication are *commutative*. This means that numbers may be added in any order or multiplied in any order without altering the result. ($3 + 5 = 5 + 3 = 8$; $5 \times 3 = 3 \times 5 = 15$)." S.M.S.G. algebra moves quickly to a consideration of the ideas of sequence and process. It develops its examples of the commutative property not simply with numbers but with symbols standing for numerical oddness and evenness (and for certain sequences of operations that can be performed with certain results in oddness and evenness). From here it moves at once to symbols expressing sequences of turns and half-turns, and at length to patterns of progression involving relations among triangles and circles. The student is eased gently aloft from mechanical manipulation of numbers through a succession of patterns to a perception of commutative property that does not depend upon the model of number, that involves a feeling for the qualities of contrived relations, and that as a consequence swiftly thrusts him in contact with the flash, dance and fluidity of a genuine although simple mathematical idea. Doubtless it would be a mistake to claim that the reformers of mathematics teaching are engaged in one more attempt to draw minds closer to an intuition of experience as process and relation, rather than as collected objects forever waiting to be assigned as someone's homework. But it is not extravagant to say that, for a reader whose study of mathematics lies in the past, an evening with an S.M.S.G. text is an exhilarating experience—a release from ordinary containments into a glistening soundless spinning world where the mind knows paths in pathless air and sails by the still diamond light of invention.

Does it follow from all this that Professor Kline's reservations about the modernists are senseless? Is the man simply to be understood as one who, nervous about altitudes, refuses to fly out of sight of land? Certainly it can be said that Professor Kline's insistence that S.M.S.G. has done nothing but introduce new topics into secondary school mathematics is difficult to accept: the new topics have plainly been *used* to illuminate structure, to demonstrate what the old mathematics was and is about, to dramatize the unity and beauty of mathematical thought. And it can also be said that Professor Kline's enthusiasm for "applications" sometimes leads him into historical overstatement. Few people who have studied the background of Leibnitz's philosophical and mathematical ideas would be entirely satisfied by Kline's statement, in a catalogue of evidence proving that "the primary motivation for mathematics is physical science," that "the calculus was motivated by celestial mechanics." But even after these carping notes have been registered, and the charm of the S.M.S.G. texts has been granted, it must be added that at least one of Professor Kline's strictures is not easy to dismiss.

The reason, as might be guessed, is that even when taught by teachers fond of metaphors appealing to intuitive understanding ("The absolute value of a number is its positive twin sister"), the S.M.S.G. series, like many of the other mathematics projects, is difficult. That is to say, it unrelentingly asks its reader to think, rarely permits him to rest in rote. Most old-line texts are geared to the average student: all students learn rules and mechanical operations, able students simply progress at a faster rate from chapter to chapter. S.M.S.G. texts begin by assuming that students not only can learn to relish higher feats than that of learning a rule and applying it, but indeed can learn how to think in mathematics for themselves. The probability is that anyone who can learn to do the latter can also learn (returning to Professor Kline's argument) how to add fractions. But more than a few who cannot learn how to think in this fashion might learn some mathematics, if they were taught in the traditional manner.

The reformers are not, of course, oblivi-

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ous to the truth that the curriculum they have devised is more demanding than the present one. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics itself has admitted that most of the new curricula were designed for "college capable students." (The University of Maryland project has been tried experimentally—and inconclusively—with slow students.) S.M.S.G. texts have thus far been used mainly in classes of above-average students, and they have not been manna to students with inferior "mathematical aptitude." Newton High School in Massachusetts used S.M.S.G. geometry materials in four classes (130 sophomores) in 1959-1960; all students were "unselected except for the fact that they were in the college preparatory curriculum." The head of the school's mathematics department reports that "while our measuring device was probably crude, it is significant that when these students were compared with those in the traditional geometry course, the better students in the new program did better, the poorer students did poorer." In response to this criticism the S.M.S.G. has already prepared seventh and ninth grade texts for slower students; these are being tested and will be revised for use in the fall of 1962.

Until the results of the test are known, the question whether "improved mathematics" texts adapted to low "reading levels" can be effective with ordinary students will remain a question. And that this is a slightly different problem from the one raised by Professor Kline does not mean that it is insignificant, or that Professor Kline's role in bringing it to notice is trivial. It may or may not be true that the N.Y.U. professor deserves thanks for reminding his profession, and the interested public, that however arbitrary and accidental the connections between reality and mathematical systems, society is obliged to consider them important—since there is no definite schedule for the entrance of common men into the promised world of pure mentality. It may or may not be true that his real service was to face men of mind once again with the need to decide when, if ever, the great intellectual "revolutions" of this century should be enacted in the curricula of schools and colleges. But his arguments do bring into focus a key problem of twentieth-century democracy: how to educate men for leadership without dividing society into rigid classes of knowers and hewers. And for this they can be valued.

But not—this is all-important—not to the point at which they assume parity with the labor of the "modernists" they attack. The S.M.S.G. projectors have not thought deeply on the problem of selective education. Their original conception probably was a shade utopian in character: a vision of ideal teachers and ideal students that could not correspond to American (or any other) facts. And they have not yet succeeded in describing, in fully comprehensible terms, their goals and the particular techniques they are employing in the hope of accomplishing them. But they have created instruments with the aid of which many thousands of Americans will come, early in life, to a sense of the light and grace of a world once nastily bound in briars. And beyond this, they have demonstrated that the academic can serve the public interest brilliantly without meeching about the White House. The mathematical projectors chose not to isolate themselves in tight graduate school hives; they were willing to expose their studies and their present modes of thought to the eyes and understandings of humbler teachers and humbler students; they have not hesitated to accept responsibilities that other professionals too often cynically delegate to publishers' drummers or third-rate academic minds. Even if they had failed in the task they undertook, they would for these reasons deserve praise and honor rather than abuse. As it is, they have a claim to a tolerably high rank among the exemplary intellectuals of this age.

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The Antislavery Myth

C. VANN WOODWARD

Slavery and the Civil War were prolific breeders of myth, and their fertility would seem to wax rather than wane with the passage of time. Neither the proslavery myths of the South nor the antislavery myths of the North ceased to grow after the abolition of the Peculiar Institution. In fact they took on new life, struck new roots and flourished more luxuriantly than ever. Both myths continually found new sources of nourishment in the changing psychological needs and regional policies of North and South. The South used the proslavery myth to salve its wounds, lighten its burden of guilt and, most of all, to rationalize and defend the system of caste and segregation that was developed in place of the old order. The North, as we shall see, had deeply felt needs of its own to be served by an antislavery myth, needs that were sufficient at all times to keep the legend vital and growing to meet altered demands.

In late years the proslavery myth and the plantation legend have been subjected to heavy critical erosion from historians, sociologists and psychologists. So damaging has this attack been that little more is heard of the famous school for civilizing savages, peopled with happy slaves and benevolent masters. Shreds and pieces of the myth are still invoked as props to the crumbling defenses of segregation, but conviction has drained out of it, and it has been all but relegated to the limbo of dead or obsolescent myths.

Nothing like this can be said of the antislavery myth. Its potency is attested by a steady flow of historical works by journalists and reputable scholars. It is obvious that the myth can still dim the eye and quicken the pulse as well as warp the critical judgment. Apart from the fact that it is a creation of the victor rather than the vanquished, there are other reasons for the undiminished vitality of the antislavery myth. One is that it has not been subjected to as much critical study as has the proslavery myth.

Before turning to certain recent evidence of the exuberant vitality of the antislavery myth, however, it is interesting to note two penetrating critical studies of some of its components. Larry Gara, in *The Liberty Line: The Legend of the Underground Railroad*,[1] addresses himself to a limited but substantial element of the myth. No aspect of the myth has so deeply engaged the American imagination and entrenched itself in the national heritage as the underground railroad, and no aspect so well reflects what we fondly believe to be the more generous impulses of national character. It is a relief to report that Mr. Gara is a temperate scholar and has avoided handling his subject with unnecessary rudeness. By the time he finishes patiently peeling away the layers of fantasy and romance, however, the factual substance is painfully reduced and the legend is revealed as melodrama. Following the assumptions that the better critics of the proslavery legend make about the slave, he assumes that "abolitionists, after all, were human," and that the "actual

✪ C. VANN WOODWARD, recently appointed Sterling Professor of History at Yale University, will take up his duties there next fall, after a year on leave. Formerly professor of history at Johns Hopkins University, Mr. Woodward is the author of a number of books on the history of the South, the most recent of which is *The Burden of Southern History*.

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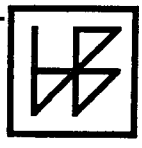

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men and women of the abolition movement, like the slaves themselves, are far too complex to fit into a melodrama."

One very human thing the authors of the melodrama did was to seize the spotlight. They elected themselves the heroes. It was not that the abolitionists attempted to stage *Othello* without the princely Moor, but they did relegate the Moor to a subordinate role. The role assigned him was largely passive—that of the trembling, helpless fugitive completely dependent on his noble benefactors. The abolitionist was clearly the hero, and as Gerrit Smith, one of them, put it, the thing was brought off by the "Abolitionists and the Abolitionists only." As Mr. Gara points out, however, it took a brave, resourceful and rebellious slave to make good an escape, not one temperamentally adapted to subordinate roles—no Uncle Tom, as abolitionists often discovered. Moreover, by the time he reached the helping hands of the underground railroad conductors—if he ever did in fact—he had already completed the most perilous part of his journey, the southern part.

Another important actor in the drama of rescue who was crowded offstage by the abolitionists was the free Negro. According to the antislavery leader James G. Birney, the assistance of the fugitives was "almost uniformly managed by the colored people. I know nothing of them generally till they are past." The fugitive slaves had good reason to mistrust any white man, and in the opinion of Mr. Gara the majority of those who completed their flight to freedom did so without a ride on the legendary U.G.R.R.

Still another human failing of the legend-makers was exaggeration, and in this the abolitionists were ably assisted by their adversaries, the slaveholders, who no more understated their pecuniary losses than the abolitionists underestimated their heroic exploits. Under analysis the "flood" of fugitives diminishes to a trickle. As few as were the manumissions, they were double the number of fugitives in 1860 according to the author, and by far the greater number of fugitives never got out of the slave states. Another and even more fascinating distortion is the legend of conspiracy and secrecy associated with the U.G.R.R. The obvious fact was that the rescue of fugitive slaves was the best possible propaganda for the antislavery cause. We are mildly admonished that the U.G.R.R. was "not the well-organized and mysterious institution of the legend." "Far from being secret," we are told, "it was copiously and persistently publicized, and there is little valid evidence for the existence of a widespread underground conspiracy."

But there remains the haunting appeal and enchantment of the secret stations, the disguised "conductors," and the whole "underground" and conspiratorial aspect of the legend that is so hard to give up. "Stories are still repeated," patiently explains Mr. Gara, "about underground tunnels, mysterious signal lights in colored windows, peculiarly placed rows of colored bricks in houses or chimneys to identify the station, and secret rooms for hiding fugitives." These stories he finds to be without basis in fact. While we must continue to bear with our Midwestern friends and their family traditions, we are advised that, "Hearsay, rumor, and persistent stories handed down orally from generation to generation are not proof of anything."

The most valuable contribution this study makes is the revelation of how the legend grew. It was largely a postwar creation, and it sprang from a laudable impulse to be identified with noble deeds. Family pride, local pride and regional pride were fed by abolitionist reminiscences and floods of memoirs and stories. "Every barn that ever housed a fugitive, and some that hadn't," remarks Mr. Gara, "were listed as underground railroad depots." There were thousands of contributors to the legend, but the greatest was Professor Wilbur H. Siebert, whose first book, *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom,* appeared in 1898. In the nineties he painstakingly questioned hundreds of surviving antislavery workers, whose letters and responses to questionnaires Mr. Gara has reexamined. Mr. Siebert accepted their statements at face value "on the ground that the memories of the aged were more accurate than those of young people." The picture that emerged in his big book was that of "a vast

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network of secret routes," connecting hundreds of underground stations, operated by 3,200 "conductors"—the very minimum figure, he insisted. This work fathered many subsequent ones, which borrowed generously from it. There has been no lag in legend-building since. "The greater the distance," observes Mr. Gara, "the more enchantment seems to adhere to all aspects of the underground railroad, the legend that grew up around it, and its role in America's heritage."

A second and more elaborate aspect of the antislavery myth is the legend that the Mason and Dixon Line not only divided slavery from freedom in antebellum America, but that it also set apart racial inhumanity in the South from benevolence, liberality and tolerance in the North. Like the Underground Railroad Legend, the North Star Legend (for lack of another name) was a postwar creation. Looking back through a haze of passing years that obscured historical realities, the myth-makers credited the North with the realization in its own society of all the war aims for which it fought (or eventually proclaimed): not only Union and Freedom, but Equality as well. True, the North did not win the third war aim (or if it did, quickly forfeited it), but it nevertheless practiced what it preached, even if it failed to get the South to practice it, and had been practicing it in exemplary fashion for some time.

For a searching examination of the North Star Legend we are indebted to Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860.*[2] He starts with the assumption that, "The inherent cruelty and violence of southern slavery requires no further demonstration, but this does not prove northern humanity." On racial attitudes of the two regions he quotes with approval the observation of Tocqueville in 1831: "The prejudice of race appears to be stronger in the states that have abolished slavery than in those where it still exists." White supremacy was a national, not a regional credo, and politicians of the Democratic, the Whig and the Republican parties openly and repeatedly expressed their allegiance to the doctrine. To do otherwise was to risk political suicide. "We, the Republican party, are the white man's party," declared Senator Lyman Trumbull of Illinois. And, as Mr. Litwack observes, "Abraham Lincoln, in his vigorous support of both white supremacy and denial of equal rights for Negroes, simply gave expression to almost universal American convictions." These convictions were to be found among Free Soil adherents and were not unknown among antislavery and abolitionist people themselves.

One reason for the unrestrained expression of racial prejudice from politicians was that the Negro was almost entirely disfranchised in the North and was therefore politically helpless. Far from sharing the expansion of political democracy, the Negro often suffered disfranchisement as a consequence of white manhood suffrage. By 1840 about 93 per cent of the free Negroes in the North were living in states that excluded them from the polls. By 1860 only 6 per cent of the Northern Negro population lived in the five states that provided legally for their suffrage. In only three states were they allowed complete parity with whites in voting. Even in those New England states doubts lingered concerning the practical exercise of equal political rights. As late as 1869, the year before the ratification of the 15th Amendment, New York State voted against equal suffrage rights for Negroes. Four Western states legally excluded free Negroes from entry.

In Northern courtrooms as at Northern polls racial discrimination prevailed. Five states prohibited Negro testimony when a white man was a party to a case, and Oregon prohibited Negroes from holding real estate, making contracts or maintaining lawsuits. Only in Massachusetts were Negroes admitted as jurors, and that not until the eve of the Civil War. The absence of Negro judges, jurors, witnesses and lawyers helps to explain the heavily disproportionate number of Negroes in Northern prisons.

Custom, extralegal codes and sometimes mob law served to relegate the Negro to a position of social inferiority and impose a harsh rule of segregation in Northern states. According to Mr. Litwack:

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In virtually every phase of existence, Negroes found themselves systematically separated from whites. They were either excluded from railway cars, omnibuses, stagecoaches, and steamboats or assigned to special "Jim Crow" sections; they sat, when permitted, in secluded and remote corners of theaters and lecture halls; they could not enter most hotels, restaurants, and resorts, except as servants; they prayed in "Negro pews" in white churches, and if partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, they waited until the whites had been served the bread and wine. Moreover, they were often educated in segregated schools, punished in segregated prisons, nursed in segregated hospitals, and buried in segregated cemeteries.

Housing and job opportunities were severely limited. A Boston Negro wrote in 1860 that "it is five times as hard to get a house in a good location in Boston as it is in Philadelphia; and it is ten times as difficult for a colored mechanic to get work here as it is in Charleston." The earlier verdict of Tocqueville continued to ring true. "Thus the Negro is free," he wrote, "but he can share neither the rights, nor the pleasures, nor the labor, nor the afflictions, nor the tomb of him whose equal he has been declared to be; and he cannot meet him upon fair terms in life or in death."

In Northern cities with large Negro populations, violent mob action occurred with appalling frequency. Between 1832 and 1849 mobs touched off five major anti-Negro riots in Philadelphia. Mobs destroyed homes, churches and meeting halls, and forced hundreds to flee the city. An English Quaker visiting Philadelphia in 1849 remarked that there was probably no city "where dislike, amounting to hatred of the coloured population, prevails more than in the city of brotherly love!"

The Southern historian will be struck with the remarkable degree to which the South recapitulated a generation later the tragic history of race relations in the North. Once slavery was destroyed as a means of social control and subordination of the Negro, and Reconstruction was overthrown, the South resorted to many of the devices originally developed in the North to keep the Negro in his "place." There was more delay in the resort to segregation than generally supposed, but once it came toward the end of the century it was harsh and thorough. One important difference was that in the antebellum North the Negro was sometimes free to organize, protest and join white sympathizers to advance his cause and improve his position. His success in these efforts was unimpressive, however, for by 1860, as Mr. Litwack says, "despite some notable advances, the Northern Negro remained largely disfranchised, segregated, and economically oppressed." The haven to which the North Star of the legend guided the fugitive from slavery was a Jim Crow haven.

While these two studies of the antislavery myth are valuable and significant, they are slight in scope and modest in aim when compared with the far more ambitious—and traditional—book of Dwight Lowell Dumond, *Antislavery: The Crusade for Freedom in America.*[3] Elaborately documented, profusely illustrated and ornately bound, this massive volume is easily twice the bulk of an average-sized book. It covers the entire scope of the organized antislavery movement in this country, as well as pre-organizational beginnings, and is the most extensive work on the subject in print. Represented as the result of "more than thirty years" of research by the Michigan historian, it is the outcome of a lifetime absorption in antislavery literature. It is doubtful that any other scholar has lavished such devoted study upon this vast corpus of writings.

The author's total absorption with his source materials is, indeed, the key to the theory of historiography upon which this remarkable work would appear to be based. That theory is that the purest history is to be derived from strict and undivided attention to source materials—in this case chiefly the writings, tracts and propaganda, running to millions upon millions of words, of the antislavery people themselves. If the author is aware of any of the scholarly studies of slavery and antislavery that have appeared in the last generation or more, he does not betray awareness by reference to the questions they have raised, by use of methods they have developed, or by incorporation of findings they have published.

[3] *University of Michigan Press. $20.*

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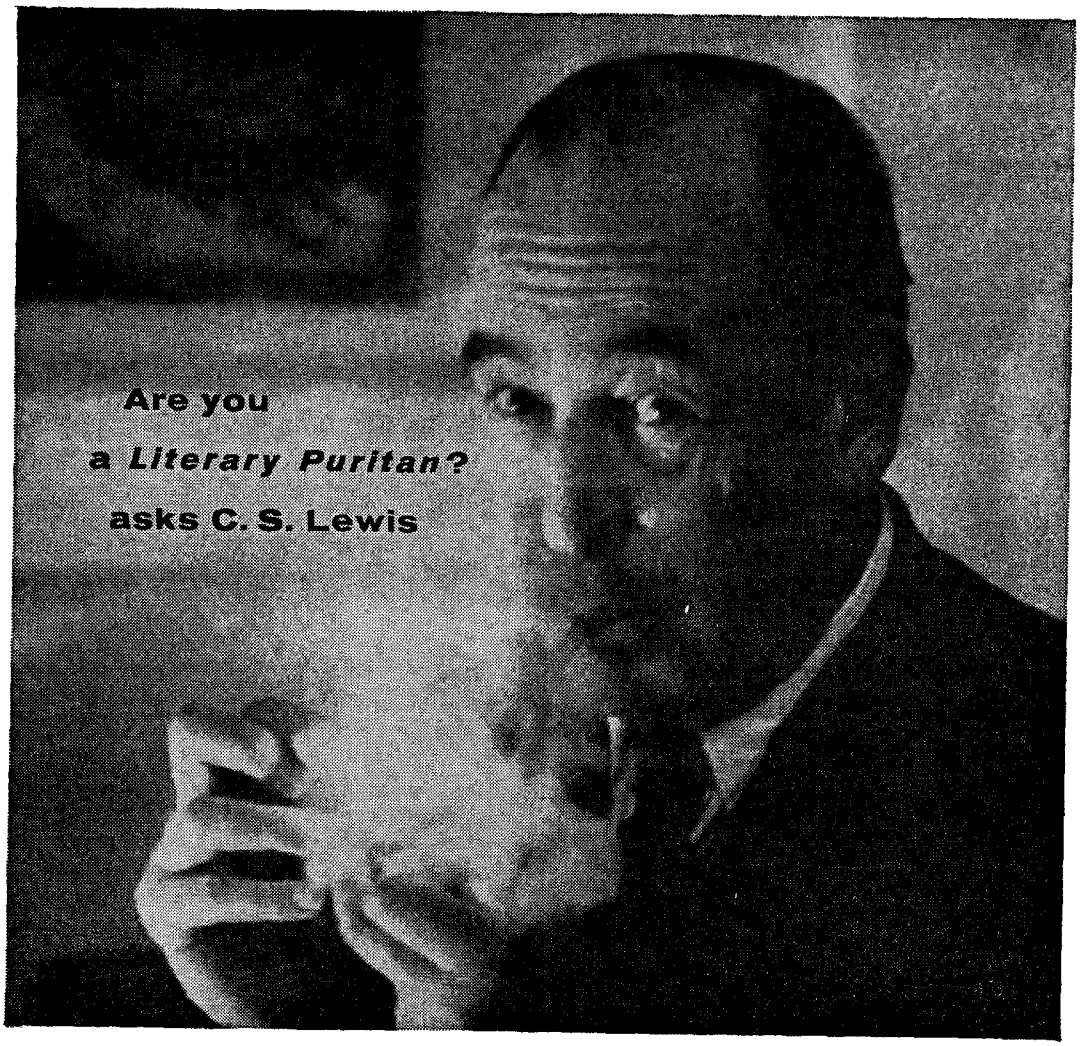

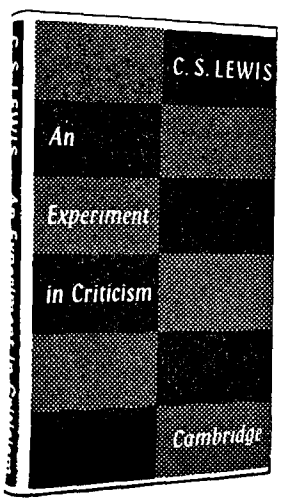

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Neither the problems of slavery and antislavery that have been pressed upon the historian by new learning in psychology, anthropology, sociology and economics, nor the questions that have been raised by fresh encounters with Africa and Afro-Americans and by new experience with reformers and revolutionists and their motivation, receive any attention from the author. It is difficult to comment intelligently upon a work that so persistently and successfully avoids engagement with the contemporary mind, its assumptions, its preoccupations, its urgent questions, its whole frame of reference.

Mr. Dumond's treatment of slavery and the abolitionists admits of no complexities or ambiguities beyond the fixed categories of right and wrong. All of his abolitionists are engaged in a single-minded crusade wholly motivated by a humanitarian impulse to destroy an evil institution and succor its victims. They are moral giants among the pygmies who cross their will or fail to share their views. The single exception is William Lloyd Garrison, for whom he shares the strong distaste of his onetime collaborator Gilbert H. Barnes, the Midwestern historian. "In fact," writes Dumond (the italics are his), *"he was a man of distinctly narrow limitations among the giants of the antislavery movement."* Why Garrison falls so far short of the stature of the giants is not quite clear, but we are assured that he was "insufferably arrogant," given to "cheap cynicism" and withal "a timid soul except when safely behind the editorial desk."

Apart from Garrison, the antislavery leaders command Mr. Dumond's unqualified admiration, and his praise of them is unbounded. "What a combination of intellect, courage, and Christian faith!" he exclaims in describing the founders of the American Anti-slavery Society. The abolitionists are indeed due a redress of grievances at the hands of the historians, for they have had something less than justice from the craft. They are remembered more as pictured by caricatures such as Henry James drew in *The Bostonians* than for their good works and genuine merits. The wild eccentricities, the fierce come-outerism, the doctrinaire extravagancies and the armchair bloodlusts of some of the abolitionists have been stressed and repeated to the neglect of the dedicated and fearless work they did in the face of ridicule, mob violence and all the pressures that wealth and established order can bring to bear upon dissenters. Their cause was just, and among their numbers were men and women of courage, intelligence and moral force. They deserve their due and need a sympathetic defender.

The trouble with Mr. Dumond as historian of the antislavery movement is his total involvement. This involvement extends beyond hatred of slavery and approval of abolition. It commits him as well to the style and tone and temper, the immediacy of indignation, the very idiom and rhetoric of a movement of thought that took its shape from intellectual influences and social conditions existing nearly a century and a half ago. The effect is startling. The rhythm and color of his prose is in perfect keeping with the style and tone of the scores of lithographs and prints from old abolitionist tracts that serve appropriately to illustrate the book. The author paints just what he sees, but he sees everything through the eyes of the 1830's. The result is more than an anachronism. It gives the effect of a modern primitive, a Henri Rousseau of historiography.

Any treatment of the antislavery movement necessarily involves some treatment of the institution it opposed. Mr. Dumond's conception of slavery would seem to have taken shape in considerable degree from the antislavery literature he has so thoroughly mastered. At any rate, he quotes liberally from this literature in characterizing slavery. Among other things, he quotes a poem by Timothy Dwight, published in 1794, the year before he became president of Yale. The last stanza of it reads as follows:

> Why shrinks yon slave, with horror, from his meat? / Heavens! 'tis his flesh, the wretch is whipped to eat. / Why streams the life-blood from that female's throat? / She sprinkled gravy on a guest's new coat!

"Poetic license?" asks the historian. "Exaggeration? Fantasy? *Only half the truth, if a thousand witnesses are to be believed.*" And they, he assures us, are to be believed.

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Mr. Dumond selects Theodore Dwight Weld's *American Slavery As It Is,* published in 1839, as "the greatest of the antislavery pamphlets," and still the best historical authority on slavery. "It is an encyclopedia of knowledge. It is a book of horrors," he writes. Weld himself correctly described it as "a work of incalculable value" to the abolitionist cause. "Facts and testimonies are troops, weapons and victory, all in one," he wrote. The principles governing its composition are suggested by a letter to Weld from two editorial advisors, Sereno and Mary Streeter: "Under the head of personal cruelty [you] will be obliged to reject much testimony; and this is not because the facts are not well authenticated but because those which are merely *horrid* must give place to those which are absolutely diabolical." Absolutely diabolical or not, in the opinion of Professor Dumond, "It is as close as history can come to the facts." According to his theory of historical evidence, "Diaries and plantation records are largely worthless because slaveholders never kept a record of their own evil ways."

The strong sexual theme that pervades antislavery literature often took a prurient turn, but in Mr. Dumond's hands the pruriency is transmuted by bold treatment. The presence of miscegenation is attested by the Census of 1860 and the proportion of the colored population of the South that was of mixed blood. But to Mr. Dumond, sexual exploitation becomes very nearly the basis of the institution of slavery. "Its prevalence leads to the inescapable conclusion," he writes, "that it was the basis—unspoken to be sure—of much of the defense of the institution." Ulrich B. Phillips, the Southern historian of slavery, doubtless betrayed a certain blindness when he reported that in all the records he studied he could find only one instance of deliberate "breeding" of slaves, and that an unsuccessful one in colonial Massachusetts.[4] To Mr. Dumond, however, it is plain as day that the

[4] John Jossylyn recorded in 1636 that Mr. Maverick owned a slave woman with whom he commanded his male slave, "will'd she nill'd she to go to bed to her—which was no sooner done than she kickt him out again."

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"breeding" was practiced by *all* slaveholders: "That is exactly what slave owners did with the slaves, and there were no exceptions." To the Georgia historian there were no instances, to the Michigan historian no exceptions! What is one to tell the children?

Mr. Dumond's main subject, of course, is not slavery but antislavery. In his treatment of this great theme the myth is slightly muted, but it nevertheless pulses powerfully through the whole narrative. The Underground Railroad is described as "a highly romantic enterprise" that became "well organized." In these pages it operates with all the enchanting conspiracy and secrecy of the legend, with fugitive slaves "secreted in livery stables, in attics, in storerooms, under featherbeds, in secret passages, in all sorts of out of the way places." There was one hayloft in Detroit that "was always full of Negroes."

In Professor Dumond's history the North Star Legend is given very nearly full credence. In striking contrast with the account rendered in detail by Mr. Litwack, we are informed that Negroes "continued to vote without interruption in New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and in the two slave states of New York and New Jersey," and that there were never "any distinctions whatever in criminal law, judicial procedure, and punishments" in any New England states. "Negroes were citizens in all of these [free?] states," he writes (leaving it unclear how many). "They were citizens by enjoyment of full political equality, by lack of any statements to the contrary in any constitution or law, by complete absence of legal distinctions based on color, and by specific legal and constitutional declaration, and any statements to the contrary by courts, federal or state, were contrary to historical fact and are worthless as historical evidence." There is no hint of the thoroughgoing system of Northern segregation described by Mr. Litwack. It is admitted that one might "find a less liberal attitude toward free Negroes" in the Midwestern states, but that is easily accounted for: "There was a preponderance of Southern immigrants in the populations." In spite of this, we learn that in Jackson's time, "the

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Northern people, freeing themselves of the last vestiges of slavery, moved forward in a vast liberal reform movement."

The theory Mr. Dumond applies to the antislavery movement colors and coerces his reading of the whole of American history from the Revolution through the Civil War. This reading amounts to a revival of the long discredited theory of the Slave Power Conspiracy, a dominant hypothesis two or three generations ago. Slavery, we are told, "gave clay feet to Patrick Henry . . . and I suspect to Washington and Jefferson as well." Of the Revolutionary leaders he writes: "Those men were perfectly willing to spread carnage over the face of the earth to establish their own claim to freedom, but lacked the courage to live by their assertion of the natural rights of men." Of the Presidential contest of 1800 we are told: "This election enabled Jefferson to lay solidly the foundations of the party of agrarianism, slavery, and decentralization." Any mention of Jefferson is accompanied by a reminder that he owned slaves. The achievement of a group is discredited with the phrase, "slaveholders all." The Virginia Dynasty, its heirs and successors of the next three decades, and most of their acts and works including the Constitution, fare pretty harshly under this rather restricted historical criterion.

The whole sectional conflict that eventually erupted in the Civil War is construed, of course, in terms of right versus wrong, North against South. Civil War historians will be interested to learn that "there was complete co-ordination by the Congress, the President, and the field commanders of the Army" in their mutual determination to abolish slavery at the earliest possible moment. This revelation will require a good deal of revision in accepted views, which take into account a great lack of coordination among those distracted branches of the wartime government.

It is possible that Professor Dumond's interpretations of American history might be traced directly to an unfortunate theory of historical method. Neither this nor the extended criticism of his work already undertaken would be worth the effort, however, were it not for what the book reveals

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about the present vitality and amazing persistence of the antislavery myth. His book is the latest and fullest embodiment of the myth. Yet it comes with endorsements of unqualified praise from leading authorities in the field. The wide flaps of the dust jacket bear such recommendations from the three foremost present-day historians of the American Civil War, followed by the equally enthusiastic praise of prominent historians from four of our most respected universities. These are not men who share Mr. Dumond's restrictive concepts of historiography, nor are they given to bestowing praise lightly. They undoubtedly mean what they say. What two of them say is that this book is "definitive," and all agree that from their point of view it is wholly satisfying.

One would like to know more about their reasoning. Several of them refer directly or obliquely to present-day social problems that are a heritage of slavery, meaning segregation and the movement for Negro rights. But surely one can establish his position upon such clear-cut contemporary moral problems as these without compromising the standards of historical criticism. And by this time, one hopes, it is possible to register a stand on the slavery issue without feigning the apocalyptic rages of a John Brown. No, these are not adequate or convincing explanations, at least for the reactions of these particular historians.

In all probability the real reason why this ponderous, fierce and humorless book is handled with such piety and solemnity is the very fact that it does embody one of the great American myths. We have never faced up to the relationship between myth and history. Without tackling the semantic difficulties involved, we know that *myth* has more than pejorative usages and that it can be used to denote more than what one deems false about the other man's beliefs. In the nonpejorative sense myths are images, or collections of them, charged with values, aspirations, ideals and meanings. In the words of Mark Schorer, they are "the instruments by which we continually struggle to make our experience intelligible to ourselves." Myths *can* be, in short, "a good thing." No man in his right mind, and

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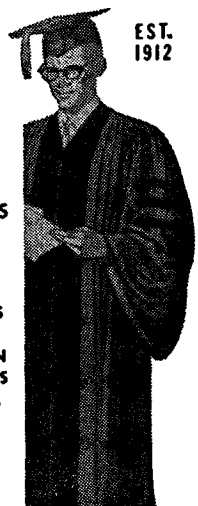

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surely not a responsible historian, will knowingly and wantonly destroy a precious thing. And no doubt some would hesitate to lay hands on a book that, improperly though it may be, got itself identified as a repository of cherished values.

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As a result of such studies, intelligent, contemporary Americans can speak of the myth of equality without self-consciousness or cynicism, and embrace it without striking the pose of a defiant Jacksonian of the 1830's. Contemporary westerners are able to cherish and preserve frontier values without assuming the role of a Davy Crockett. And southerners can even salvage some of the aristocratic heritage without wallowing in the Plantation Legend.

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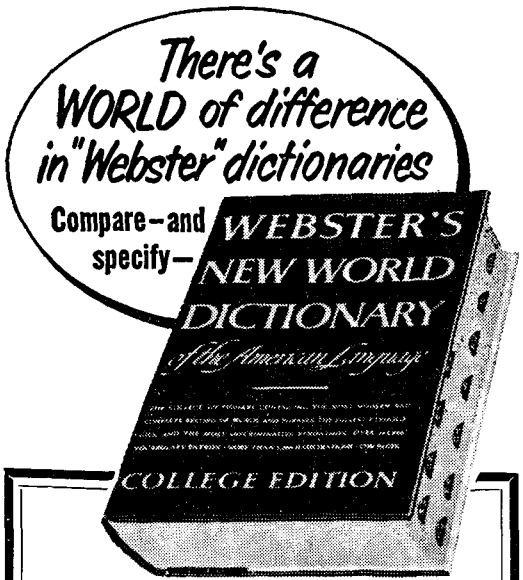

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probably be slow. The provocative suggestions of Stanley M. Elkins, in *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life*,[6] have been gravely rebuked for impropriety, if not impiety. The orthodox text is obviously still the gospel according to Mr. Dumond.

The big assignment on the Antislavery Myth still awaits a taker. The eventual taker, like any historian who would make myth the proper subject of his study, should be involved without running the risks of total involvement. It would help a great deal if he could contrive to bring detachment as well as sympathy to his task. It is also to be hoped that he might make legitimate use of irony as well as compassion. And, finally, no aspirant with inappropriate regional identifications need apply.

[6] *University of Chicago Press. $4.50.*

Field for Historical Passion

PROHIBITION: THE ERA OF EXCESS. *By Andrew Sinclair. Little, Brown.*

Reviewed by PAUL A. CARTER

It is easier to write with detachment and compassion about social phenomena one disapproves of if they are remote in time and place. It would be possible nowadays to write with objectivity and even perhaps with a certain wry anthropological sympathy about, say, the institution of gladiatorial combat in ancient Rome; whereas a study of the history of bullfighting would almost inevitably arouse and express either the aversion of a person sensitive to pain or the ritualistic rationalizations of an *aficionado*. One would hope that today, thirty years after the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, the prohibition of liquor in America as a field for historical passion would be as dead as the gladiatorial arena was after the edict of Honorius; unhappily, if the work before us is any indication, this is not yet quite the case.

✪ PAUL A. CARTER, a native New Englander, currently teaches American history at Montana State University. He is the author of *The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel: Social and Political Liberalism in American Protestant Churches, 1920-1940.*

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Mr. Sinclair has tried very hard not to make the mistake of espousing the partisanships of his subject. He is at pains to point out that those who opposed Prohibition have some of the same faults to answer for at the bar of history as have its proponents; that some Repealers became Liberty League reactionaries just as some Prohibitionists came out of a tradition of bona fide humanitarianism; and that on certain controverted polemical points between "wets" and "drys" "the truth of the matter lay in both sides." But this line does not hold when he warms to his subject, and it does not hold because Sinclair writes out of certain premises that inevitably, in his judgment of the phenomenon of Prohibition, make him a wholehearted partisan "wet."

The most important such premise has to do with the historic conflict between rural and urban America, of which conflict Prohibition is a late and conspicuous manifestation. Sinclair assumes, sharing this assumption with a number of liberal historians in urban universities, not merely that the traditional American myth of agrarian virtue pitted against metropolitan vice is untrue, but that something very like the reverse is true: namely, that the city in America has had to fight to sustain its humane values against the onslaughts of mean-spirited and narrow-minded ruralism. That there is some truth in this view no reader of, for example, the first three and the seventh chapters of Richard Hofstadter's *The Age of Reform* can deny. But, as Vann Woodward reminded readers of his article, "The Populist Heritage and the Intellectual," in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR (Winter, 1959-60), there is real danger that in revising the agrarian myth we shall end with the disconcerting discovery that our heroes and villains have simply changed places.

To a greater extent than one would wish, this process has happened to the cast of characters of Mr. Sinclair's book. Whatever is narrow, corrupt and vicious in rural life and among the "drys" is frequently deemed typical; whatever is tolerant, large-minded and rational in city life and among the "wets" is also, too often, deemed typical. (It may be noted that this argument is often supported by a kind of scriptural proof-text

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reading of *Civilization and Its Discontents,* which is, of course, never the way to read Freud, and especially not the poetry/philosophy of late Freud.)

The people and movements Sinclair does not like he tends to judge by their worst sayings and behavior; those he likes, by their best. Worse, the same traits are evaluated differently for different people. (For example, vacillation in Herbert Hoover was hypocrisy or moral cowardice, whereas in Al Smith either it was sound politics or it wasn't really vacillation.) He finds it difficult to accept the sincerity of people on the "bad" side, saying of Bryan, for instance, that "he thought that he believed in what his father had believed, and his father's father." If we remember that Bryan, an ambitious man, resigned the high office of Secretary of State over a matter of principle, is it really necessary to have him cut down to size with that subtly colored verb, "thought"?

The most egregious example of this sort of thing is the treatment of Woodrow Wilson, who, Sinclair astonishingly informs us, "came finally to . . . dry extremism." Wilson was "conditioned in favor of the drys by his heredity," even though his upbringing is shown in the next paragraph to have taken place in a home which practiced temperance rather than abstinence. The later discussion of Wilson's relations with Congress over Prohibition entirely belies the charge, although Sinclair gives Wilson as little credit for vetoing the Volstead Act as he can; and at the end we are shown that what Wilson came to "finally"—which is to say, just before his death—was a reversion to the liquor *status quo* in America as of 1913. And so, his argument running thin, our author fleshes it out by saying, in effect: well, anyway, Wilson was *like* the "drys" in his moral rigidity on the question of the League of Nations! Here, surely, is guilt by free association, with a vengeance.

In sum, Mr. Sinclair has written a merely good book on a subject that merits a great one. It is good because, by copious and well-selected quotation ranging from Al Capone's views on private enterprise to Senator Reed's home recipe for pumpkin gin,

(*Continued on page 341*)

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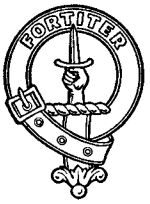

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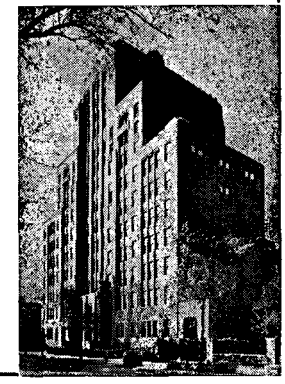

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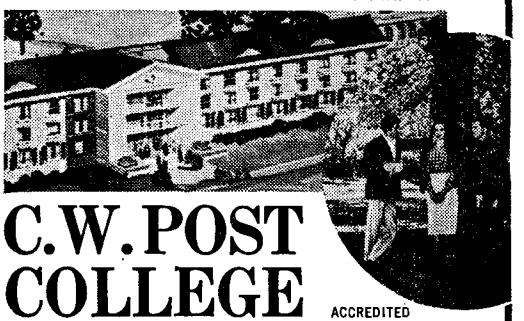

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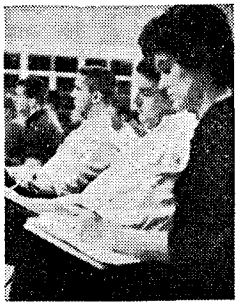

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(*Continued from page 330*)

he conjures up the spirit of an age that the rising generation does not know at first or even at second hand. It falls short of greatness because it touches but does not cut deeply into Prohibition as a philosophical and historical problem. Why, for example, was Prohibition considered so *important* an issue by both its friends and foes—so important that the Volstead Act was seriously compared with the Fugitive Slave Act? Casual citations from Freud and Sherwood Anderson cannot answer the question. Why did the country-versus-city feud, which after all is universal in human history, take this form only once in only one nation in western Christendom? Prohibition is an event as mysterious as the Children's Crusade; Mr. Sinclair has done his research diligently and has given us some interpretive insight, but his subject in its essence is still darkness.

A German Humanist

MARXISM: AN HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL STUDY. *By George Lichtheim. Praeger. $8.50.*

Reviewed by H. STUART HUGHES

George Lichtheim represents a vanishing species—a truly cultivated journalist, with an elegantly perceptive mind, whose forays into scholarship can put to rout the professionals on their own ground. A transplant from Central Europe to England (and subsequently, for a brief period, to America), he has added to the understanding in depth derived from his native habitat the corrective of Anglo-Saxon skepticism and humor. Throughout he has remained a cosmopolitan—as the adjective "Central European" rather than "German" or "Austrian" implies—a "free-floating" intellectual in the

✪ H. STUART HUGHES is professor of history at Harvard University and chairman of its interdepartmental program in history and literature. His most recent book is *Contemporary Europe: A History. An Approach to Peace,* a collection of his essays including, "Why We Had No Dreyfus Case," which appeared in the Autumn 1961 SCHOLAR, will be published this spring by Atheneum.

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most favorable sense of the term. Six years ago his *Pattern of World Conflict*, published under the pen name of G. L. Arnold, received far less attention than it deserved: I think it was because its urbane analysis cut across the stereotypes of both the cold war-oriented majority among his readers and the socialist-minded and philo-neutralist minority. I trust that his study of Marxism—the single most rewarding volume I have encountered in this far from neglected field—will at length bring its author the esteem he merits.

Mr. Lichtheim is immersed in history and he is not afraid of making value judgments. These are the qualities that distinguish his book from the multitude of its competitors. "Marxism," he says, "is to be understood as a historical phenomenon, as against the now standard analysis of Marxian theory in terms of its compatibility with modern thought. . . . We cannot discover what [Marx] said without considering the problems he set out to solve, and we cannot analyze the problems without judging the validity of his attempted solutions. And since a problem for Marx was never simply a theoretical question, we cannot consider his solutions without taking a stand on the issues involved. That is why all attempts to discuss Marxism in a morally neutral atmosphere are from the start condemned to failure."

The result is a book packed with interpretation and judgment. It is far too short for what it seeks to convey—or rather, lazy-minded readers will find it excessively compressed. Mr. Lichtheim assumes a good deal of previous knowledge, and he is not given to lengthy paraphrases of the works he analyzes. (Marxian economics, for example, he dismisses in a single chapter.) With an evident awareness of the choice he has made, he has firmly grasped one horn of the intellectual historian's classic dilemma, preferring to puzzle his readers with an unexplained allusion or reference, as against the opposite fault of spelling out everything in full. As a practitioner of the same trade, I take my stand alongside Mr. Lichtheim in this matter: few literary genres, I think, are more depressing than the variety of intellectual history that jogs reassuringly from *précis* to *précis*, as a mediocre mind platitudinizes the thoughts of the great. My only criticism of Mr. Lichtheim's writing is that the organization of his individual sentences and paragraphs does not always match the admirable order of his table of contents. The rationale for his paragraph sequence is frequently hard to detect, and his sentences are loosely hung. Had he taken as much care with his word order as he did with the critical analysis that went into his book, this reader for one would have been spared a number of perplexing moments.

But that is detailed carping. It is in the broad sweep that Mr. Lichtheim excels. Shifting deftly back and forth between theoretical formulation and historical event, he anchors Marxism in the French Revolution and then carries it down through 1848 and the Paris Commune, the major era of party organization in the 1880's and 1890's, and the upheavals of the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution, until he brings his account to an end in 1948, with the final "dissolution of the Marxian system." He never quite explains why he chose the date 1948 (although the convenience of the centenary of Marx's *Manifesto* is obvious), but the rest of his analysis implies that the concatenation of events that year witnessed—the halting of Communism's advance in Western Europe and its simultaneous triumph in China—completed more than four decades of eastward displacement which in the end reduced Marxism to a dry bundle of nineteenth-century memories.

Thus Mr. Lichtheim depicts Marx as a man of his epoch—more clairvoyant than his rivals, but still, like them, imbedded in the social and historical experience of the Victorian era. This is a Marx unfamiliar to most Americans—a German humanist in the Kantian tradition gradually shedding his intoxication with Jacobin example, "the last, as well as the greatest, of the classical economists," whose life was that of a sober bourgeois and who shared his intellectual assumptions with John Stuart Mill. In such a reading, Marx's philosophical materialism takes second or third rank: it was Engels, Mr. Lichtheim explains, who in the positivist atmosphere of the 1870's and

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1880's, first with his senior colleague's grudging acquiescence, then more boldly in the twelve years that elapsed between his friend's death and his own, recast the doctrine to fit the "scientific" temper of the Darwinian age. In the process, Marx's original moral vision of a "creative drama of human liberation" was almost lost. (And Mr. Lichtheim, like Erich Fromm and a number of other recent commentators, stresses the importance of the manuscripts dating from the 1840's in which this vision was embodied.) In the course of Marxism's reinterpretation as "dialectical materialism," it was drained of its ideal content. And by the same token it forfeited its potential attraction for the German intellectual middle class, which embraced instead a "romantic irrationalism" whose end product was Hitler.

It is in these two respects, I think, that Mr. Lichtheim has made the greatest contribution to our understanding—in his stress on what Engels (and Kautsky and Plekhanov after him) did to the original doctrine, and on the long-range significance of German history and German social conditions for Marxism's future. Germany, he reminds us, was always different from the West: here the political democracy that became second nature in France or Britain had to be bitterly fought for and was never secure, and here quite naturally the process of radicalization began that was to move Marxism's center of gravity steadily eastward through Poland and Austria (with Rosa Luxemburg and the Viennese Socialist leaders) to Russia (as embodied in Trotsky, who, Mr. Lichtheim implies, took a greater theoretical leap than Lenin) to come to rest and dissolve at last in the domains of Mao Tse-tung. Similarly, it was Marxism's failure in Germany in the years 1918-1923 that made unavoidable the perversion of its ideals farther east, and its concomitant transformation into a matchless instrument for rationalizing the industrialization of "backward" areas.

All this is something that we Americans today—with our simplified image of a Germany just like any other Western democracy—can well stand having recalled to mind. At the same time it has about it a tone of elegy and of nostalgia for a vanished past which we may find inappropriate. Mr. Lichtheim, like Marx before him, is a product of traditional German humanism. It is quite understandable that he should grieve at seeing his ideal origins swallowed up by the disasters of the years 1914-1945. *Our* leftist tradition, in its healthiest manifestations, derives rather from pragmatism and the Fabians, and our debt to Marx is almost always at second hand. While we may agree most emphatically with Mr. Lichtheim's contention—following Joseph Schumpeter, who a generation ago served likewise as an intellectual bridge between the Central European and the Anglo-American world—that Marxist criteria are still relevant for historical and sociological study, we may want to take issue with his denigration of Eduard Bernstein, the German exponent of Fabianism, and with his tendency to slight the whole tradition of liberal-minded Social Democracy. Few Americans, unlike Europeans, have ever explicitly considered themselves Social Democrats. But the American democratic Left has voiced a similar impatience with dogma and with philosophical niceties and a similar insistence on ethical norms. Thus we may decide to read Mr. Lichtheim's work in a reverse sense from his—and in a sense suggested by our own contemporary social critics—as a search for the lost Marx of the 1840's before his double betrayal, first at his own hands (through the agency of Engels) and then by Lenin and Stalin.

Attack from Hudson Street

THE DEATH AND LIFE OF GREAT AMERICAN CITIES. *By Jane Jacobs. Random House. $5.95.*

Reviewed by EDWARD J. LOGUE

Jane Jacobs has produced 448 pages of bitter, rambling coffeehouse talk mostly attacking urban renewal, public housing and city planning. It is the first all-out attack of its kind, and it's getting a lot of attention. It should. So little of city planning has been

EDWARD J. LOGUE is Development Administrator of the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

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translated into reality that the basic planning assumptions have by and large escaped outside scrutiny or even comment. Urban renewal has for the most part moved so slowly that it, too, has escaped fundamental criticism. Although the mistakes of public housing are all about us the debate has been primarily ideological and largely irrelevant.

Mrs. Jacobs' attacks are angry and too discursive. The Parkinson approach would have been far more effective. Boiled down to a hundred pages, this book would have made quite a tract.

Mrs. Jacobs is a senior editor of *Architectural Forum* and is married to an architect. They and their three children live on Hudson Street in Greenwich Village. She likes it there, and wild horses could not get her to move to Fairfield County. I must assume the rest of the family prefers city life, too. At any rate they cannot leave now, not after this book.

Close observation of Hudson Street has provided the basic ideas, values and judgments in the book. The limitation shows.

Mrs. Jacobs does not think cities are in very bad trouble, and she makes quite clear her belief that the worst thing that could happen to them is more urban renewal, city planning and public housing. Most people seriously concerned with bettering the residential parts of older cities center their attention on neighborhoods. Not Mrs. Jacobs. For her the street block is the key. She likes sidewalks. Wide sidewalks are terribly important, she feels. Neighborhood parks should be small.

Mrs. Jacobs' main criterion for a good neighborhood is a matter of how many eyes are focused on the street over how long a part of the day. Preoccupied with safety and determined to live in the city, she has analyzed what makes some streets safe and others dangerous. Diversity and activity seem to be the key, and please let us not have the blocks too long.

Exciting as life on Hudson Street may be, there will be few of us who share her almost compulsive need for movement and variety. As a city dweller all my life I think peace and quiet can be urban virtues too.

Mrs. Jacobs doesn't care too much about beauty. A city, she says, cannot be a work of art. She hasn't much use for grass, and she doesn't worry half as much about automobiles as most.

When it comes to panning public housing Mrs. Jacobs has no peers. She is devastating in her criticism of the big ugly projects that have replaced the slums with stark, dreary clusters and towers having all the warmth of the immigrant station on Ellis Island. She thinks it is time we fixed them up, joined them with the neighborhoods they abut but are not part of. Imagine filling up those fenced-in grass plots with candy stalls or food shops or open-air vendors. Every rule in the book would have to be broken, but why not? It is worth a try. But no more new projects. Mrs. Jacobs would provide decent housing for those who cannot afford it by rent subsidies for dwellings built by private enterprise. This, too, is worth a try.

Too often the facts are doctored to make the case stronger. We are told that the marvelous North End of Boston is to be wiped out and rebuilt under Boston's renewal program. Yet the official policy is stated thus:

> The North End is one of the most lively neighborhoods of Boston. It has a flavor and a way of life which should be preserved, not destroyed. A clearance project for the North End would be an outrage. The city would never be the same. Every effort should be made to rehabilitate and strengthen this unique neighborhood.

But there are compensations for the reader. If you are curious about why Ebenezer Howard conceived the Garden City, Jane Jacobs has the answer. She reprints an account of street life in London in the 1890's. The horse in quantity, it seems, could be quite as offensive as the automobile.

There is much more going on in urban renewal today than Mrs. Jacobs seems aware of. It is getting closer to people, more concerned about design, more inclined to rehabilitation, less mesmerized by the bulldozer. Mrs. Jacob's book will help its agents to become more sensitive to people and the parts of city life that work best.

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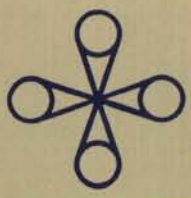

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